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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

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Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

AUGUST 1920

2/- Net MONTHLY

Poetry	Wilfrid Wilson Gibson
	"Kia Ora"
	Dorothea Still
	C. A. Dawson Scott
	Bernard Gilbert
	Constance Green
	Kenneth Hare
Thus to Revisit (ii)	Ford Madox Hueffer
The Depravity of Romance	Michael Arlen
Confined as a Lunatic (iii)	"Oxonian"
Worse than War	May Sinclair
The Barrie Method and a Melodrama	John Pollock
Thumbs Up	Senex
"His People"	Frances Rivers
"Mary Rose"—in Europe	Austin Harrison
A Footnote to Mr. Hueffer	H. G. Wells
Another Criticism	Ethel Colburn Mayne
"The Liberators"	S.O.
Dedicated to Art	Thomas Moult
Books	

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Fifteen pence pays for a day's outing for one child. £13 pays for a complete party of 200 children with adult attendants. £1 pays for a fortnight's holiday for one child.

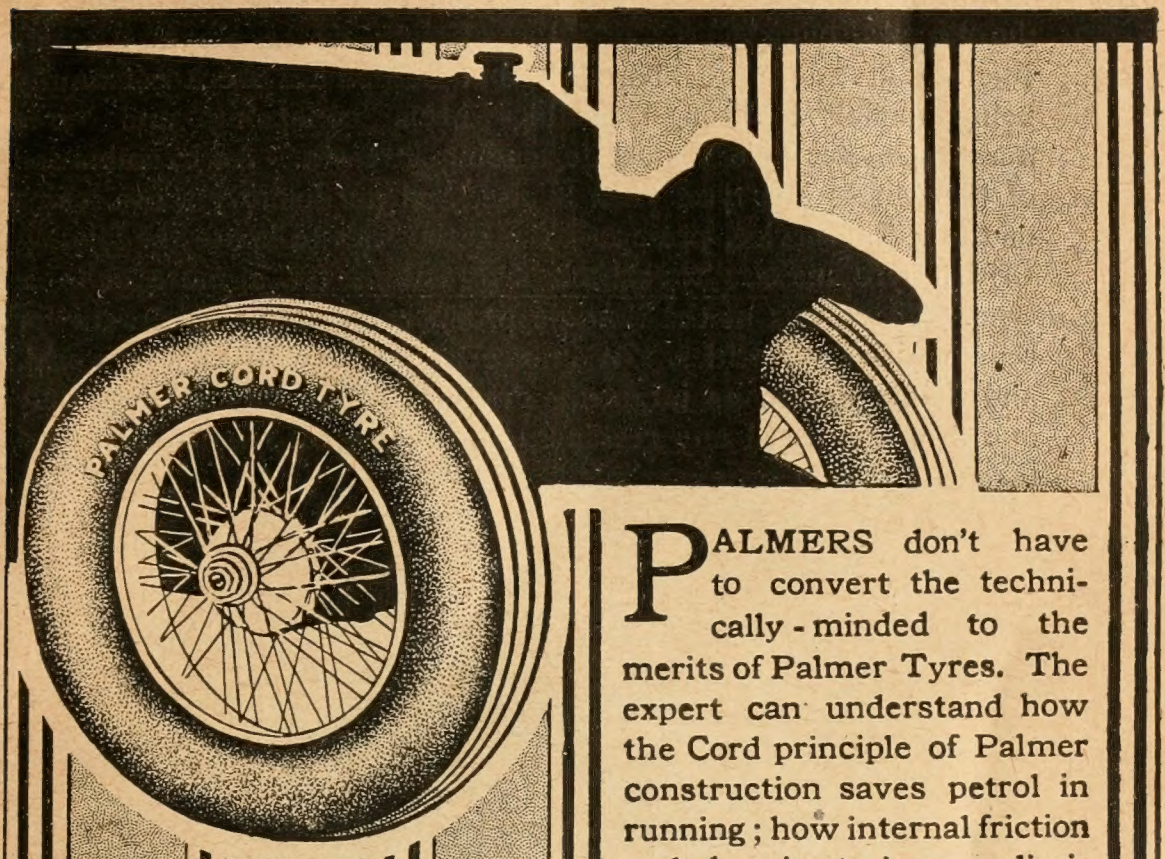
All working expenses are paid by the promoters, nothing being deducted from subscriptions for that purpose.

250,000 poor children in the large towns of the United Kingdom are anxiously looking forward to a short holiday this summer. Many thousands will be disappointed unless financial assistance is received at once.

Subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. ERNEST KESSELL, Hon. Sec. Pearson's Fresh Air Fund, 224 Gt. Portland Street, London, W.1.

PALMER POINTS No. 5

Service



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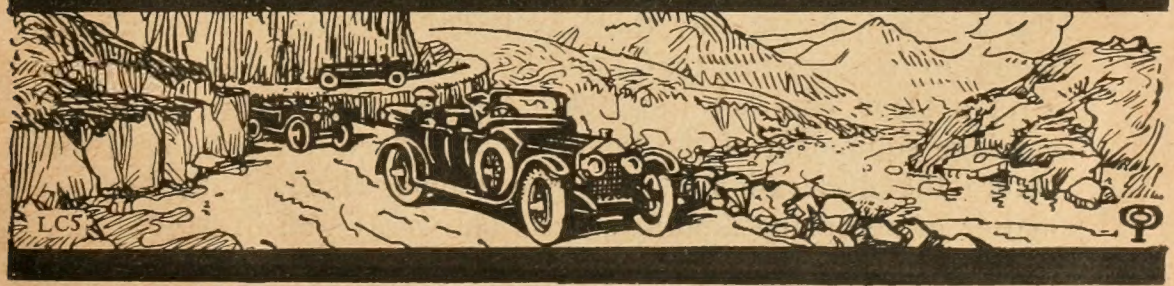
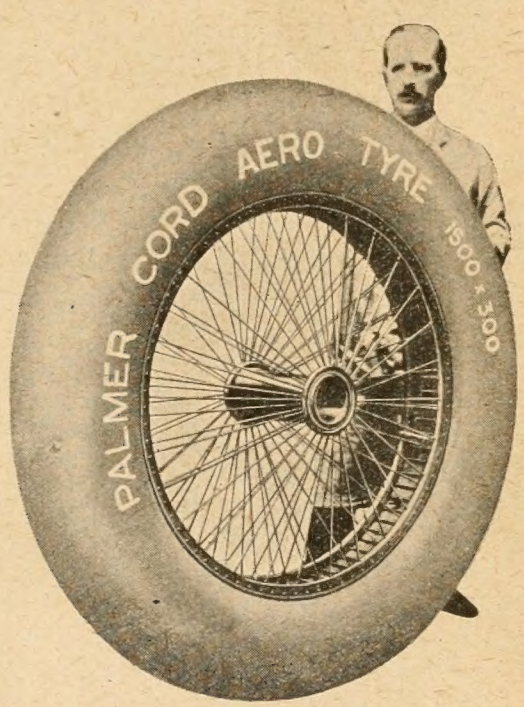


Economy and Durability.

¶ Towards the end of 1912 it had been noticed by the officers of the Royal Flying Corps and the officials of the Royal Aircraft Factory at South Farnborough that aeroplanes were constantly being damaged through landing-wheels collapsing and tyres bursting under quite moderate landing stresses. An examination of the wheels and tyres then in use, and particularly those which had failed in service, prompted the authorities to invite the leading British tyre makers to submit suggestions for a more suitable type. There was at the time no prospect of obtaining orders for remunerative quantities. We were at peace with all the world, and flying was in its infancy. Presumably on this account only one firm expressed any readiness to investigate the problem and to spend money on experiments.



The invitation came from the directors of the Palmer Tyre, Ltd., of 119-123 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2. They went into the matter very carefully, and, believing there would some day be a more extensive demand for landing-wheels and tyres, sanctioned the necessary expenditure on experiments. These experiments were most thoroughly conducted, and in due course a small number of Palmer wheels and tyres were submitted to Farnborough for test by the Royal Flying Corps. These wheels stood up to every test that could be devised, and in the Spring of 1914 a small contract was placed by the War Office for under-carriage equipment of the Palmer type. Then it will be seen that before the declaration of war the Palmer Tyre, Ltd., had the matter of aeroplane landing-wheels and tyres well in hand.

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The outbreak of war found the Royal Flying Corps with six months' experience of a wheel and tyre which had proved better than anything the experts of the Royal Aircraft Factory had hoped for, and it followed as a natural consequence that substantial contracts were immediately placed with the Palmer Tyre, Ltd. From these small beginnings grew up the enormous Palmer organisation which during the whole course of the war supplied the entire requirements of the air services of the British Navy and Army in every theatre of operations, and more than kept pace with the always increasing output of the British aircraft industry. But the activities of the Palmer Tyre, Ltd., were not confined to meeting the aircraft requirements of the British forces. At the express request of the Department of Aircraft Production the Palmer Co. regularly supplied large quantities of their aeroplane landing-wheels and tyres to the French Government and to French aircraft constructors.

It is also an indication of the thoroughness of the Palmer organisation and the quantity of their production that when America joined the Allies the Palmer type of wheel and Palmer standard dimensions of tyres were adopted by the U.S. Service.

As might be expected of a house having such an exceptional record, the Palmer Tyre, Ltd., are making an extensive display of landing-wheels and tyres at the Aero Exhibition, Olympia (Stand No. 15). As a souvenir of the show, they are reproducing a most interesting little booklet entitled "A Record of Success." It has numerous water-colour drawings by Mr. Geoffrey Watson, the originals of which will be displayed on the Palmer stand. It also contains much technical information on rims, hubs, bushes, and wheel shields, a diagram showing aeroplane output during the war, reproductions of letters from prominent aeroplane manufacturers, War Office telegrams dealing with the speeding up of production, and many other items of an informative nature. This interesting and historical record will be obtainable at the Palmer stand free.

The Children's Holiday

¶ Emphasis to-day is stronger than ever upon the importance of saving child life. Never were the children of a nation more needed as true national assets.

There are 250,000 poor children who will not enjoy even a day's holiday in the country this year unless it is provided for them by Pearson's Fresh Air Fund. In addition to this, it is hoped that sufficient funds will come to hand to give some thousands of the most ailing children and soldiers' and sailors' orphans a fortnight at the seaside or in some rural retreat. During the past twenty-eight years the Fresh Air Fund has sent no fewer than 4,040,547 poor children for a day's outing, and 53,940 little ones to the sea or country for a fortnight's holiday.

The Fresh Air Fund operates in forty-two of the large towns and cities of the United Kingdom. All money subscribed is spent directly on the children, the expenses of management being borne by the promoters. Fifteen pence defrays the cost of a day's outing; one pound pays for a fortnight's holiday. Donors of £13 or anything over that sum can name the party of children for which the money pays.

Donations, however small, will be thankfully received by Mr. Ernest Kessell, Hon. Secretary, Fresh Air Fund, 226 Great Portland Street, London, W.1.

KING'S HEAD Tobacco

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The Pen that Lasts.

¶ Long service counts as value in most of our possessions. We become attached to books and other things, and, since the war has taught us what we can do without, we treasure old friends amongst our household gods, and do away with everything which is superfluous. Gifts have taken a serviceable form for many years, and one of the most popular and useful of all gifts for a man or woman has been the famous "Swan" Fount Pen. A "Swan" Fount Pen is one of those treasured possessions no one can afford to do without. It is distinguished for its simplicity, strength, and entire freedom from complicated or wearing parts. It is accurately made, and the parts fit to a nicety. Balance and form have been studied to give comfort in writing with large ink capacity. The "Swan" is sold by all stationers and jewellers. An illustrated catalogue will be sent, post free, from Messrs. Mabie, Todd, and Co., Ltd., on application.

Royal Surgical Aid Society.

¶ The means of giving joy and happiness to children deserves our warmest sympathy and support, and the great work being done by the Royal Surgical Aid Society is now seriously handicapped by two causes: the enormous increase in the price of materials, and a disastrous fire which destroyed not only the surgeons' rooms, patients' fitting rooms, and stock rooms, but the whole of No. 3 Dorset Buildings. Funds for the replacement of the destroyed buildings are urgently needed *now*, and unless a considerable sum is immediately raised the Society will be placed in a serious position. The Society's work is national, and it therefore appeals with confidence to all classes throughout the Empire. All communications should be sent to the Appeal Director of the Royal Surgical Aid Society, 26 Great Ormond -Street, London, W.1.

Coloured Furniture

¶ Our ideas of the relation of furniture to the appearance of a room have by no means progressed so far as they might do. Modern interior decoration has undoubtedly improved within recent years. Ugly Victorian wall-papers, cretonnes, and curtains have been abolished. We have taken to light backgrounds and gay colours so far as carpets, curtains and cushions are concerned, but no attempt has been made to include tables, chairs and beds in the new scheme of things. If harmony is the right aim every piece of furniture should be, so to speak, in the picture. It is aesthetically logical that furniture must play a positive part in the general scheme. An exhibition of painted furniture at the Mansard Gallery, Heal & Son, Tottenham Court Road, gives striking proof that there is virtually no limit to the range of colour possible in painted furniture. Most effective results are obtained at a small cost, and the merest humdrum necessities become a pleasure to the eye.

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Boardman's is the same milder and Recorder the same but fuller in flavour.

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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by Austin Harrison

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IN the early 18th Century Glasgow suffered periodically from the overflow of the Clyde. In these days that great river is better controlled and is one of the sources of the City's greatness. On it are borne those supplies of American and Oriental Tobaccos, the blending of which has given to the world the renowned "SMITH'S GLASGOW MIXTURE."

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"Team Work."

A GREAT STORY.

THE story of turning helpless cripples into useful citizens, of giving the joy of movement to children suffering from deformities of birth, of helping the afflicted and maimed in all parts of the country, is the story of the great teamwork and aim of the Royal Surgical Aid Society, carried on quietly and unostentatiously, giving help to those who cannot help themselves.

Just think—you who are enjoying the benefits of perfect limbs and freedom of movement—of what it must mean to be crippled; of the joys denied those unfortunate children whose deformities deprive them of the birthright of romp and game; of the hardships of the victims of accidents and their families. Think—and you must realise that a work which has for its aim the amelioration of suffering, the remaking of useful citizens, the means of giving joy and happiness to children deserves your warmest sympathy and support.

Founded as far back as 1862, the Royal Surgical Aid Society has supplied over 1,000,000 surgical appliances, and the number of patients treated weekly has grown from 59 to 500, amounting during the year to 18,979.

This great humane work is seriously handicapped from two causes: the enormous rise in the price of materials and a disastrous fire at its headquarters, which destroyed not only the surgeon's rooms, patients' fitting rooms, and stock rooms, but the whole of No. 3 Dorset Buildings. Yet it has been bravely carried on despite all these difficulties and serious setbacks.

Funds for the replacement of the destroyed buildings and for carrying on the work are urgently needed **now**, and unless a considerable sum is immediately forthcoming the Society will be placed in a serious position and its work hampered.

The Society's work is National, and it therefore appeals with confidence to all classes throughout the Empire, for its work is also Empire work. The Society is strictly undenominational. Need for help in distress is the only recommendation required for deserving cases.

Every little helps, but the more you can spare the greater the measure of good effected.

Will you kindly send something to help lighten the hardships of those who are the victims of misfortune and accident through no fault of their own?

Please address all remittances and communications to the Appeal Director of the Royal Surgical Aid Society, 26, Great Ormond Street, London, W.1. If you would like to have a copy of the Society's latest printed report, it will gladly be sent to you upon request.

Printed official receipt sent for every amount received. Please cross all cheques, P.O.'s, etc., thus,

Royal Surgical Aid Society, a/c payee.

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TOO many moderns let their cigarette smoking develop into a mere nervous habit of unconsidered repetition.
No harm in that, perhaps, so it stop short of real excess. But what a misuse of an exquisite gift of the kindly gods! Mere gratitude should dictate a more thoughtful appreciation of such good things as

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The Downfall

(The Terrible Peace has seen per ated a type which flourished during Great War, the Snobureaucrat. This cu creature's chief characteristics are a dency to talk of "our set," and a prof contempt for "trade," which characteri obviously fit him to control the comm of the country. By no means unmin of the loaves and fishes, he is feeling shortage, and appeals to the despised chant for more money. The Merc answers him.)

THE MERCHANT:

Signor Snoburio, many a time
oft
In your snob circles have you
me,
About my "business," mo
usances,
Still have I borne it with a pa
shrug:
For tolerance is the badge o
my tribe.
You call me "quite impossibl
"vulgar dog"!
And sneer at dull, productive w
And all for doing which you
not do.
Well, then, it now appears
need my help:
Go to, then: you come to me
you say
"Merchant, we would
monies:"—you say so;
You, that did vent your sp
upon my "trade"
And ban me, as you'd ban a
some thing
From out "*our* circles"; moni
your suit.
What should I say to you? Sh
I say,

"Have 'bounders' money? Is it possible a 'vulgar trader' has these sums to l
A 'coarse commercial' find these millions?"
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key, with bated breath, adoring humbler
Say this,—
"Kind sir, for all these courtesies I'll lend you thus much monies?"

SNOBURIO:

I am as like to treat thee so again.
If thou wilt lend this money
Lend it not as to thy friends,
But lend it rather to thine enemy.

THE MERCHANT:

I stand for judgment. Is it just that I should lend *more* monies to my enemy bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head; a beggar that was use come so smug upon the mart. You have disgraced me and hindered my milli laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my "trade," thwarted my gains, cooled my friends, heated my enemies; and what's your reason? Hath Producer hands, organs, dimensions, sense, foresight, intelligence, creative instin Is he not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the diseases, healed by the same means as a Snobureaucrat? If you "bleed" us d not suffer, if you ruin us do we not cease to produce, and if you wrong us we not revenge? At least we will be like you in that. If a Producer wro Snobureaucrat what is his humility? Revenge! If a Snobureaucrat wrong a ducer what should his sufferance be by Snob example? Why, revenge. The vil you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instructi

* * * * * *

Britain is being run for the benefit of the Bureaumaniacs, the Megalomaniacs, and Squandermaniacs.

These parasites are crushing the life out of the commercial community by iniquitous unbearable taxation, in order that they may pursue their course of mad adventures and imb extravagances. The Merchants must arrest the casting of their money in the melting pot, administer their vengeance on the culprits before it is too late.

* * * *

If anyone has any money left after paying their Income Tax the following prices interest them. Lounge Suits from £12 12s. Dinner Suits from £16 16s. Dress Suits £18 18s. Riding Breeches from £5 15s. 6d.

14 OLD BOND STREET
& 11 & 13 SOUTHAMPTON ROW
& 120 ROYAL EXCHANGE MANCHEST

THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

AUGUST, 1920.

Ellen Chester

By Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

AFTER working all day at the tanpits,
With strong hands tanned horny and hard,
And stained by the bark brown as leather,
He would come every night from the yard.

And I from my work at the laundry,
With hands soused in suds clean and white
And soft to the touch as old linen,
Would meet him half-way every night:

I'd meet him half-way every evening,
Though always I shuddered to feel
Those hard fingers gripping my fingers,
And crushing my soft hands like steel.

But now I'm forgot and forsaken;
And eagerly waiting he stands
For a girl coming home from the gardens
With weathered and grubby red hands.

As unseen in the dark of a doorway
I watch him alone and apart,
My cold fingers fumble my bosom
To loosen his clutch on my heart.

Betty Riddle

By Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

As she sits at her stall in the Martinmas Fair
With a patched blue umbrella slung over her chair,
Old Betty Riddle sells
Greenjacks and jargonels,
Fixing some ghost of old days with her stare.

"A ha'p'orth of greenjacks!" each little boy cries,
Devouring six-penn'orth at least with his eyes:
Into his grubby hands
Pears drop as still he stands;
But she gives him no glance as he munches his prize.

While mowing and mumbling she broods all the day,
And her mellow green pyramids dwindle away,
Folk in the roundabout
Racket and skirl and shout;
Yet never a word to it all does she say.

And even if, when her whole stock-in-trade's bought,
Some laughing lad's eye by that cold stare is caught,
Glumly away he'll slink,
Too dull of wit to think
Of offering a penny to her for her thought.

And soon they forget her, the lads without sense;
Yet the thought that is burning that blue and intense
Past-piercing steely eye,
Blind to the passer-by,
Must be worth a deal more than the pears and the pence.

Still staring she sits while the slow quarters chime
Till the raw fog has covered her bare boards with rime—
Crazy old wife who sells
Greenjacks and jargonels—
Having buried three husbands in all in her time.

The Western Bay

By "Kia Ora"

Lips redder than a woman's, and your skin
Faint honey-coloured. Your bright hair
Blown by the morning wind into a flame
About your elfin face.

After your crimson kissing mouth I saw,
As in a dream, your little slender limbs,
Meek breasts and modest fingers; a white fire
Curved like a garment to your rosy knees
And beat upon your little childish feet—
Naked between the sunlight and the sand
Weaving a dance.

The waves came up and covered you; green foam
And sun-crowned water to your dimpled chin,
White spray and laughter. So you swam to me
And shook the water from your gleaming sides
And curved your mouth to mine, and in the sun
Presently slept.

Child of a day-dream, now your lips are sold,
Your breasts, your body and your rosy knees;
For you were white and petalled as a bride
And paced a chapel like some human thing,
Your red hair bound about with Christian veils
And white cloth shrouding little wanton limbs.
Somewhere an organ wheezed an ancient tune,
Somewhere a staring boy. . . .

But when the evening shadows and the mist
Wrap the dull world and you are left alone,
A wind will blow enchantment: your strange eyes,
So green, so blue, will look towards the sea,
And you will hear my whispers in your ears
And you will feel my lips upon your throat
And you will feel my life beneath your breast;
Though you forget the sunlight and the spray,
Your tears and laughter.

To Death

By Dorothea Still

Truest and last of all my trusted friends,
Why do you hide
Or only murmur with your eyes held down
So near my side?
You are the only lover whose embrace
Would hold me fast
Enough to crush my fevered, fleeting moods—
Whose love would last
Beyond the passion of a restless day.
With clamour stilled
Of all the hearts I grieved unwittingly,
Because you willed
Silence to be about my sleeping head,
Safe, I should lie
In the unyielding pressure of your arms;
Sorrow's dead cry
And ecstasies unborn would lie with me.
Should my heart creep
Low to your knees and ask for your embrace
Faithfully keep
The promise which you gave me when I cried,
And swiftly come
Out of the dust beneath life's noisy wheels
To take me home.
Peewits would call upon the darkening hill
But in my heart all crying would be still.

The Dream

By C. A. Dawson Scott

I

Bury me
Below the wind,
But not too deep,
I pray you, not too deep.

No stone above me . . . I would have the light
Filter through clover roots to lie
On my shut eyelids, I would know
That clouds are drifting by the moon
In the soft greyness between sun and sun;
That the rose-flame of dawn has leapt
From rim to zenith.

"Walk"?
Nay, I would stretch my limbs,
My weary limbs,
And, resting, listen to the tales
The deep is telling;
Or would lie
And muse on wings,
The gull's wing when it curves
Into the sunset, when it breasts
The storm . . .
After I have forgotten . . . wings!

Bury me
Below the frost . . .
For I have lived my winter,
Let it take
Some other woman's apple-blow
Her summer and her fruiting.

II

Let nothing break
Into the hush of noon, of drowsing tides;
And no-one lay
"Remembrance" as a gift of roses, plucked
And dying roses,
Roses and their thorns
Upon my breast.

If you should come this way
Brushing the clover with that quick
Light hunter step.
"Somewhere here
She should be lying, she who loved".
And dew of tears should fall
Should soak into the dust
That was my heart
With "Though I wandered, it is you
At last. . . ."

Fullness of life!
I took the craving of long years,
The craving I, perforce, had stayed
With husks,
Into this peace.

My arms are lax and empty, but I dream!
Oh, do not dare to come,
Lest . . . lest the dream . . .

I could not let you go!

Two Sonnets

By Bernard Gilbert

I GAZE with envy on the erring few
Who pay for knowledge with a long regret
And backward glances where their fate was met,
Whilst memory throws a glamour o'er the view.
But I, the withered bough, no Spring renew;
Entangled in the closely woven net
Of dreadful nights, for soul by body set,
My wasted youth assumes a sickly hue.

To fade away and never find relief,
To suffer all with recompense denied,
Paying the fullest price without the prize;
Worn by a quenchless thirst, a hopeless grief,
For love passed by, for courage set aside:
This is the gnawing worm that never dies.

I LONG for understanding: day and night
This awful loneliness I cannot bear;
In all the earth there is not one to care,
No one to penetrate, with love, aright.
Men are too sensual, they have no sight,
The inward piercing spirit is too rare;
Of clay compounded grossly, ill they fare;
And, wrapped in silence still, I yearn for light.

If I could yield myself to one great wave,
Surrender spirit first, then all beside;
Lay down my arms before a power confessed;
Then should I gladly own myself a slave
To him who overmastered my poor pride;
Cease wandering, alone, and be at rest.

April

By Constance Green

As jewels falling from a heavenly crown
The glittering raindrops suddenly come down
In radiant showers: the dusty fields turn brown.

Deep in the bosom of the sombre mere
Great snow-capped clouds mysteriously appear:
Her empty heart in wonder folds them there.

From their long sleep each lovely scented flower
Awakes, to share in April's wondrous dower
Of light and shade, of sunshine and of shower.

Dancing beside the little laughing rill,
Deep in its golden heart a daffodil
Treasures a rainbow-tinted raindrop still.

Across the sunlit lea the cuckoo cries:
Eternal Youth in that strange, mocking guise
Out of the ancient Past upon us flies.

When in a clear green sea the sun goes down,
Up to the poplar's peak a thrush has flown;
There, clearly limned, he sings to God alone.

And when the night steals gently o'er the scene,
Cleaving the darkness with her sickle keen,
The silver moon shall from the heavens lean

To hear the nightingale, deep in the grove,
Assail the night with passionate songs of love
That e'en the steadfast, olden stars might move.

Thereafter silence: while from realms of sleep
Steal waters of oblivion cool and deep
The weary soul of man in peace to steep.

A Rhapsody of Air

By Kenneth Hare

O DELICATE Air steeped through
With blue beyond all blue,
    Dazzling the eye,
The man who lives in thee
Shall live delightfully,
    And late shall die!

About the castle wall
The blue swifts wheel and call,
    And morn and even,
To small breasts white as milk
Thou feel'st as softest silk
    New spun in Heaven.

Thou bringest ecstasy,
Thou puttest rock and tree
    In tuneful plight,
While from the bosky vales
Blown notes of nightingales
    Do breathe delight.

Thou art fulfilled with song,
That doth to thee belong
    In heritage,
Since first the lark bore loud
Above the crispèd cloud
    The lyric rage.

A cloud of lesser birds,
In few but golden words,
    Thy virtues boast—
"Bright Air, all hail!" cry they,
"Thou thwart'st despair, decay,
    And death almost!"

In mellow undertone
A rhythmic phrase is blown
From the green wheat,—
"Thee, Air, our rippling ways
And thee our poppies praise
With accent sweet."

Anon with golden fret
The grasshopper dew-wet
Provokes a throng
That chant to citherns small—
Amidst of grasses tall,—
The sunbright song.

Thou tell'st of thyme, the bee,
The bright gorse and a sea
Of boundless blue.
Of dragon-flies no dearth—
Wing'd gems of joyous birth—
Exult in you.

Thou art to taste as wine
To them in drouth that pine
With long annoy,
Thou art to smell—a rose,
To feel—a coal that glows,
To see—a joy!

O fair beyond all fair,
Exquisite summer air
Dazzling the eye,
Thou subtlest of all things
That bearing wandering wings
Or sing or fly.

O Air in this my song
I also praise thee long
And thee alone—
The robe Apollo wears,
The glory from his hairs
And from his throne.

Thus to Revisit . . . (ii)*

Some Reminiscences

By Ford Madox Hueffer

III.

The Lordly Treasure-House.

We set out, then, to search for a New Form for the Novel, and, possibly, a formula for the Mot Juste. A modest quest; but we demanded nothing less.

Since I have said that Mr. Conrad was, of the two, the more preoccupied with the question of form, modesty demands that I should treat of that first—though whether of right contour comes before texture I leave to other pens to decide. Let us ascertain what the author of the *Nigger of the Narcissus* meant when he spoke of a New Form for the English Novel:

Looking around us, then, at our predecessors and contemporaries, and the models they presented to our view, we saw only one thing: the sacrificing—the ignoring indeed—of every other attribute of Art in order to produce the Strong Situation. All characters had to be outlined *à coups de hache*, to be seven feet high and to walk from two to four feet above the ground in order that, towards the end of a book one of them might exclaim: "And my poor fool is dead!" or another, "Curse you, Copperfield!" And, indeed, conversing yesterday with one of our most distinguished critics as to the relative values of James and Meredith, I was astonished to hear him say: "Yes: the *Real Thing* is all very well; but consider the matchless situation in chapter xvi (or it may have been xvii) of *Emilia*. That scene alone is worth all that Henry James ever wrote." He went on to say that all the rest of *Emilia* bored him—but he repeated that that one Strong Situation washed out all claims of the author of the *Princess Casamassima* to be considered alongside the author of *Evan Harrington*.

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I bring in those two books on purpose, for in each the influence of Dickens is enormously evident. It was, in fact, as difficult for anyone born shortly before 1850 to escape the influence of the author of *Little Dorrit* as it is for all of us, born since 1603, to avoid that of the authors of *Lear*—and the Authorised Version. The great passion of humanity—to be "told fairy tales to"—is undying. Why, indeed, should it die? C'est doux; c'est aimable; et ça sent . . . la mère, I suppose. Nevertheless there are other occupations for grown men. And the novels of Dickens, Fielding and Shakespeare are in form (leaving aside the question of texture) fairy tales for adults.

At the date of which I am writing—say a quarter of a century ago—the Novel was still the newest, as it remains the Cinderella, of Art-Forms. (That of the "Movies" had not yet appeared.) The practice of Novel Writing had existed for a bare two hundred and fifty years: the novelist was still regarded as a rogue and vagabond, and the Novel as a "waste of time"—or worse. And the idea of the Novel as a work of Art, capable of possessing a Form, even as Sonnets or Sonatas possess Forms—that idea had only existed since 1850, and in the France of Flaubert alone, at that. Writers had certainly aimed at "progressions of effect." in short efforts since the days of Margaret of Navarre; and obviously what the Typical English Novelist had always aimed at—if he had aimed at any Form at all—and what the Typical English Critic looked for—if ever he condescended to look at a Novel—was a series of short stories with linked characters and possibly a culmination. Indeed, that conception of the Novel has been forced upon the English Novelist by the commercial exigencies of hundreds of years. The Romances of Shakespeare, novels written for ranted recitation and admirable in the technique of that Form, were moulded by the necessity for concurrent action in varying places: the curtain had to be used. So you had the Strong Situation in order that the psychological stages of Othello should be firm in the hearer's mind whilst Desdemona was before the audience. The Novels of Fielding, of Dickens and of Thackeray were written for publication in Parts: at the end of every part must come the Strong Situation, to keep the Plot in the reader's head until the First of Next Month. So with the eminent contem-

poraries of ours in the 'nineties of last century: if the writer was to make a living wage he must aim at Serialization: once again you must have a Strong Scene before you write "To be continued," or the reader would not hanker for the next number of the magazine you served. But you do not need to go to Commercial Fiction to find the origin of the tendency: if the Reader has ever lain awake in a long school dormitory or a well-peopled children's bedroom, listening to or telling long, long tales that went on from day to day or from week to week, he will have known, or will have observed, the necessity to retain the story in the hearer's mind, and to introduce, just before each listener's head sank on the pillow—the Strong Situation. Indeed, Scheherezade knew that pressing need!

It was against the tyranny of this convention that Conrad was revolting when so passionately he sought for the New Form. How often, in those distant days, lamenting the unlikelihood of our making even modest livings by our pens, have we not sighingly acknowledged that Serialization was not for us! For I think we both started out with at least this much of a New Form in our heads: we considered a Novel to be a rendering of an Affair. We used to say, I will admit, that a Subject must be seized by the throat until the last drop of dramatic possibility was squeezed out of it. I suppose we had to concede that much to the Cult of the Strong Situation. Nevertheless, a Novel was the rendering of an Affair: of one embroilment, one set of embarrassments, one human coil, one psychological progression. From this the Novel got its Unity. No doubt it might have its cæsura—or even several; but these must be brought about by temperamental pauses, markings of time when the treatment called for them. But the whole novel was to be an exhaustion of aspects, was to proceed to one culmination, to reveal once and for all, in the last sentence, or the penultimate; in the last phrase, or the one before it—the psychological significance of the whole. (Of course, you might have what is called in music your Coda.) But it is perfectly obvious that such a treatment of an Affair could not cut itself up into Strong Situations at the end of every four or every seven thousand words. *That* market, at least, was closed to us.

I have suggested that we were more alone in our search

for the New Form than, very likely, we actually were. (There was, of course, always Mr. George Moore.) Mr. Bennett must, at that date, have been engaged in acquiring the immense knowledge of French tricks and devices that his work has since displayed. But I fancy he had as little love for pure Form for its own sake as he has for the French. I may be wrong. I have also—quite impenitently—misrepresented Mr. Wells when, on a former page, I stated that he lectured me on one æsthetic form—that which prohibited the introduction of the hero and heroine in the first chapter. It went, naturally, further than that.

Certainly he lectured. Being the one more avid of life and sensation, he would. Indeed, almost everybody I have ever come across has lectured me—from Mr. Ruskin to Mr. Pound. Nevertheless, during the lecture I pursued what I will call subconscious cogitation. It was, I suppose, in 1899 or thereabouts, and at last I got my word in, somewhat as follows:—

SELF. I suppose then, in the matter of Form, you arrive at the Sonata.

H. G. Yes, that's it. What *is* the Sonata?

SELF. Like this: You state your first subject (Hero or Heroine) in the key of the Tonic. You then state your second subject (Heroine or Hero) in the key of the Dominant, if the first subject is in a major—or in the key of the relative major, if the first subject is in a minor key. You repeat all that, and that finishes the first part. Then comes what is called the working out or Free Fantasia . . .

H. G. Then there is some Freedom . . .

SELF. In that you mix up themes A and B, embroider on them in any related, or even unrelated, keys and tempi. You introduce foreign matter if you like . . .

H. G. I see. The Tertium what is it?

SELF. You introduce foreign matter, and generally have a good time. In the Re-statement you re-state: A emphatically in his or her key, and B, equally emphatically, but in the tonic original key of A. That becomes the key of the whole Sonata: Op.

232 in E Flat Major! You *might* re-state the Foreign Matter which you introduced in the Free Fantasia . . .

H.G. Ah!

SELF. But that is irregular. And you may or may not have a Coda, a short sweet passage of reminiscence—the children tumbling over the Newfoundland on the lawn.

H. G. Don't you mean the feeling of relief after the divorce?

SELF. Of course, the Coda should give a feeling of relief.

H.G. To think of you knowing all that. I thought you were only interested in Golf!

And, if you look at *Tono Bungay*, *The New Machiavelli* or *Marriage*, you will see the Sonata Form closely, if now and then irregularly, adhered to. But I shall not be mispresenting the rest of Mr. Wells' lecture if I say that it concerned itself with choice of subjects—which should be significant, strong, of deep social interest and so on.

In the meantime, magisterially and at leisure, in Rye, Henry James was performing the miracles after whose secrets we were merely groping. I don't know why—but we rather ignored that fact. For, in the end, Conrad found salvation not in any machined Form, but in the sheer attempt to reproduce in words life as it presents itself to the intelligent observer. I daresay, if we could only perceive it, Life has a pattern. I don't mean that of birth, apogee, and death, but a woven symbolism of its own. The Pattern in the Carpet, Henry James called it—and that he saw something of the sort was no doubt the secret of his magic. But, though I walked with and listened to the Master day after day, I remember only one occasion on which he made a remark that was a revelation of his own aims and methods. That I will reserve until it falls in place in the pattern of my own immediate carpet. For h rest, our intercourse resolved itself into my listening silently and wondering unceasingly at his vain observation of the littlest things of life.

"Are you acquainted," he would begin, as we strolled under the gateway down Winchelsea Hill towards Rye. . . . Ellen Terry would wave a gracious hand from her garden

above the old Tower, and the leash of Maximilian would require several re-adjustments, and the dog himself a great many sotto voce admonitions as to his expensive habit of chasing sheep into dykes. "Are you acquainted," the Master would begin again, "with the terrible words . . ."

A higgler, driving a cart burdened with crates of live poultry, would pass us. The Master would drive the point of his cane into the roadway. 'Now *that* man!" he would exclaim. And he would break off to say what hideous, what appalling, what bewildering, what engrossing, Affairs were going on all round us in the little white cottages and farms that we could see, dotting Playden Hill and the Marsh to the verge of the great horizon. "Terrible things!" he would say. "Appalling! . . . Now that man who just passed us . . ." And then he would dig his stick into the Road again and hurry forward, like the White Queen escaping from disaster, dropping over his shoulder the words: "But that probably would not interest you . . ."

I don't know what he thought *would* interest me!

So he would finish his sentence before the door above the high steps of Lamb House:

"Are you acquainted with the terrible, the devastating words, if I may call them so, the fiat of Doom: 'I don't know if you know, sir'? As when the housemaid comes into your bedroom in the morning and says: 'I don't know if you know, sir, that the bath has fallen through the kitchen ceiling!'"

My own servants used to say that his eyes looked you through and through until you could feel your own backbone within you, and it was held in Rye that he practised black magic behind the high walls of Lamb House . . .

The last time I saw him was in August, 1915—in St. James's Park. He said:

"Tu vas te battre pour le sol sacré de Mme. de Staël?"

I suppose it was characteristic that he should say, 'de Mme. de Stael,' and not of Flaubert or even Georges Sand. He added—and I knew how sincerely!—that he loved France as he had never loved a woman.

Re-visiting, now, the glimpses of the morn one finds, alas, little traces of the passage of this good, great figure—nor yet of his love for France.

IV.

Mots justes . . .

I have said that I remember only one occasion on which Henry James spoke of his own work. That was like this: He had published the *Sacred Fount*, and was walking along beside the little shipyard at the foot of Rye Hill. Suddenly he said:

"You understand . . . I *wanted* to write the *Great Good Place* and the *Altar of the Dead*. . . There are things one wants to write all one's life, but one's artist's conscience prevents one. . . And then . . . perhaps one allows oneself. . ."

I don't know what he meant . . . Or I do! For there *are* things one wants to write all one's life—only one's artist's conscience prevents one. That is the first—or the final, bitter—lesson that the Artist has to learn: that he is not a man to be swayed by the hopes, fears, consummations or despairs of a man. He is a sensitised instrument, recording to the measure of the light vouchsafed him what is—what *may* be—the Truth. I fancy that that is why the idea of applying any theory of art to the process of writing is so disliked by the typical English Man of Letters. . . We are such a nation of Individualists. For I assure you it was hated—that idea; it was hunted; it was cried down—as if, in advocating the research for Form in a Novel or the just word in a phrase, you were not only advocating an unnatural vice or practising a hypocrisy, but as if you were likely to cause certain pecuniary loss to anyone who followed, or even so much as listened to, that *haeraesia damnosa!* How often have I not read sentences like these which come back to me from a ten-year-old review in the *Daily Telegraph*.

"Thank Heavens, we have outgrown the stage when English novelists bother their heads about the phraseology and the shape of their fiction. Mr. —— writes a straightforward, rattling tale in straightforward language. . . ."

The novelist—I forget his name: it might have been Mr. Quiller-Couch, Mr. A. E. W. Mason, Mr. E. F. Benson, Mr. William de Morgan, Mr. Richard Whiteing or the author of the *Dop Doctor*—had, in fact, "selected an excellent subject and treated it in a very spirited manner."

[That was Henry James's wonderful, sardonic politeness: he addressed it to novelists who sent him books he did not care for.] The work (I now remember the work) may have caused the Author some intellectual struggles. The reading called for none. I want to talk, however, of the "phraseology."

This Author, then (*Please*: he was a modest, unaffected English gentleman—I never in my life grudged him anything that his simple, honest novels brought him in—the desirable country place, the charming wife, the sons at Harrow. Nothing have I ever grudged him!) This Author, then, had been educated at Harrow and Oxford. In consequence his "style" for pedestrian passages of narrative was that of the daily organ with the better type of social circulation. For descriptive passages he used the phraseology of Shakespeare, as it is found in the pages of Charles Lamb. He was fond of innocent quotations, when describing starlight he would talk of patines of bright gold. For his emotional passages, strong situations, or tragic moments—these, of course, were very rare in his works!—he and his characters had recourse to the "phraseology" and the Cadences of the Authorised Version or the Book of Common Prayer. So that if the hero went anywhere he hailed a hansom or repaired to his tailor: but, if a ship took fire at sea, the conflagration illumined the heavens, and the heroine said, "Intreat me not to leave thee or to leave off from following after thee" . . A kindly and simple soul was here revealed.

Between that, then, and the "interjected finger" of Stevenson that "delayed the action of the timepiece" (and, for the matter of that, the stretched forefinger of Old Time that, I suppose, must go on sparkling for ever), we set out to search for a formula for the *Mot Juste*. Let me now particularise with great care, for, if I do not get this clear, all is indeed lost. This was how the world presented itself to our eyes: On the one hand, we had the respectable journal, critic and author whose desire was to make a not difficult living. On the other side of the fence were those literary alchemists who aim at attaining immortality by means of jewels five words long. The respectable journal could not wish to be forced to use any more actual verbiage than the *cliché phrase*—the phrase that has been mumbled

so over and over by tired jaws that you can write it half asleep and "peruse" it without disturbance during the degustation of your post-prandial port. Speakers according to this dialect are always cordially received; they do not anticipate a large exodus of Jews to Palestine; they oppose one thing or another on the grounds that the proposals are novel and of a far-reaching character. And their hansoms always have to be hailed. The Critics and supporters of these Respectabilia did not object to the fabricators of the jewels five words long, because when such a jewel has been a jewel for long enough, it can be imported into diurnal columns and be hallowed as a *cliché*. But they *did* object —and very wildly—to *le mot juste*. It was something foreign; it was indescribably troublesome. You had, they said, the "sound English" in which the daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly periodicals are still written. You had also Fine Writing—to be used occasionally. That meant fourteen words, or forty, or half a page, of tired prose and then a shot at a five-word jewel. That was easy. But—so it seemed to them—*le mot juste* meant "every word a sparkler." That was a conception that appalled our friends. It subverted the ca' canny ideal; it was contrary to the rules of the Best of Trade Unions; it was a product of snuffly, foreign, affected or sexually perverted minds. Alas! for that miserable literary botcher who—as I once heard a French Critic say—*péchait par pur snobisme*.

The trouble, however, with us was this: we could not get our own prose keyed down enough. We wanted to write, I suppose, as only Mr. W. H. Hudson writes—as simply as the grass grows. We desired to achieve a style —the *habit* of a style—so simple that you would notice it no more than you notice the unostentatious covering of the South Downs. The turf has to be there, or the earth would not be green.

Our most constant preoccupation, then, was to avoid words that stuck out of sentences either by their brilliant unusualness or their "amazing aptness." For either sort of word arrests the attention of a reader, and thus "hangs up" both the meaning and the cadence of a phrase. We wanted the Reader to forget the Writer—to forget that he was reading. We wished him to be hypnotised into thinking that he was living what he read—or, at least, into the

conviction that he was listening to a simple and in no way brilliant narrator who was telling—not writing—a true story. Mind you, that was not easy: it was perhaps easier for me than for Conrad; or perhaps it would be more just to say that I desired it more than Conrad did. For, by sheer reaction of inheritance, I had even then an absolute hatred for the "toll-loll" Great Figure, the Quarterly Reviewer, the Bibliographer and the ceaselessly mouthing Great Poet, who had overshadowed my childhood. Such disadvantages Conrad had not known, so that he had less of my hatred for Fine Writing: but his difficulties were greater. He was conquering—conquering, truly—a foreign language. And that language was particularly unsuited to our joint purpose, in that its more polite forms, through centuries of literary usage, have become absolutely unsuited to direct statement. You cannot make a statement in Literary English. And Conrad came to it by way of Miss Braddon and the English Bible . . . .

In the end, of course, he achieved both a Form and a habit of language: he invented the figure of Marlow. To Henry James, whose eye for other people's work was, strangely, too literary, Marlow was always a fabulous Master Mariner. James refused to believe in him any more than he would believe in any other mechanical device. It was useless to argue with him: he used to groan over the matter and, if I persisted at all, would end by saying that Conrad—or Marlow, that old Man of the Sea, that incredible but enduring Vampire—was ruining my prospects.

He was wrong. Marlow is a natural, simple and not at all unusual, peasant type. He is wise as to human vicissitudes as the simple or the merely poor are so frequently wise: but he is not over-read in the book-lore that is so inevitably destructive of wisdom. If I go up the hill from where I sit, on the fifty-foot contour line, or thereabouts, I shall find an old shepherd. He will be just as wise as Marlow. And, gradually, from this old man I am learning the history of a fabulous farmer, Mr. Cummings. I know already that in 1892 Mr. Cummings married his third wife. Till 1870 he still bred the old, horned, Wiltshire sheep that has now disappeared. About 1880 he ate five-pound notes between thin bread and butter—to annoy the Income Tax Authorities. In 1879 he married the first Mrs. Cum-

mings; she was still living when he married No. II. and No. III. Apparently all three ladies lived together in the great old farm till 1900. He was a little, terrible, swearing man, with a pimply face and no teeth. He was the first man to use a steam-plough in these parts, and his eldest son went to America because he didn't hold with it. That would be about 1894. In 1869 Annie Meggott drowned herself in the Arun: Mr. Cummings never got over that. It was why he was like what he was. For, in 1902, on his deathbed, he sent for the old shepherd and said: "That Annie Meggot she was terrible pernickety. But upstanding and with red cheeks." He had lost the use of one eye by then.

You perceive that that is how Marlow gets hold of and tells the stories of exceptional men. And it is in that way that life really presents itself to us: not as a rattling narrative beginning at a hero's birth and progressing to his not very carefully machined but predestined glory—but dallying backwards and forwards, now in 1890, now in 1869; in 1902—and then again in 1869—as forgotten episodes came up in the minds of simple narrators. And, if you put your Affair into the mouth of such a narrator your phraseology will be the Real thing in *mots justes*, for just so long as they remain within his probable vocabulary. There will be no jewels five words long, nor, for that matter, will the narrator say that Mr. Cummings ever hailed a hansom.

[NOTE.—In the July issue, on page 13, "more literary" should read "non-literary."]

The Depravity of Romance

By Michael Arlen

Noël Anson and I had been great friends in our first youthful days, but our lives and ambitions had led us so contrarily that we had not seen each other for more than six years on the night, two weeks ago, when we happened to meet at the Club. We had both, of course, so much to say that, as often happens, we babbled on quite inartistically, spoiling many a good story in the gay, breathless exchange of reminiscence and experience; from all of which, however, clearly loomed out these great cardinal facts in our lives, that we had both married; my wife, I explained, I had had to leave behind in New Zealand to take care of her father; while his wife, who was a perfect woman, he chivalrously insisted, had thought fit to divorce poor Noël some six months before. . . .

But there was one story, anyway, which Noël did not spoil. He kept it long inside him—until that hour after ten when our corner of the smoking-room was entirely our own, and until he safely knew that I had talked enough to be able now to remain comfortably silent and attentive. Dear Noël!

"You are the very first person to hear this," he began untruthfully; and the calm grey eyes of my friend merged into the luxurious stare with which the *raconteur* hypnotically fixes his prey all the world over. Thus too must the gentle Marlow have transfixed his hearers as he led them inexorably through the labyrinth of Lord Jim's career, and through many such another intricacy of Conradian imagination.

"It's old, older than the stuff that hills and Armenians are made of. . . . The inevitable tale of the inevitable woman sitting alone in the inevitable box of the inevitable theatre to which our inevitable young man has gone to wile away a tiresome evening. History supplies the formula, it

is only the details for which I'm personally responsible. . . There I sat, one night years ago, alone in a stall at the old Imperial; grimly smoking, and watching the footlight favourites 'getting-off' with a stage-boxful of rowdy young men who hadn't the grace even to try to imitate the few gentlemen who might at one time have been good enough to know 'em—until, on a moment, my eyes circled round the upper boxes and fixed on a marvellous lady in white, amazing and alone and unashamed. . . .

"One has grown into the habit of using phrases trivially, but when I say that I caught my breath at the sight of that figure through the smoke, I mean that I actually did. There she suddenly was, a wonderful fact in a dreary place! She in contrast to all around was real, exquisite life. . . .

"And, of course, there was to her beauty the added attraction of the curious, as you can well understand. For there simply was not the slightest trace of the *demi-monde* about her, nothing at all to suggest that she might at any moment be the mistress of a Grand Duke—as, the deuce take it, there well might be about any woman who had the effrontery to sit so shamelessly alone and—and *soignée* in the front of a box at the Imperial! I mean, it was not the sort of thing one's sister could do and look dignified about—in fact, it is some very special and subtle quality which will prevent a well-dressed woman looking like a courtesan under certain circumstances. This dark-haired, immobile, alien woman had just that quality—well, of utter 'rightness'; she was impeccable. It was more than an impertinence not to take for granted that she herself had walked into Cartier's and bought that rope of pearls around her throat . . . for although she was in one of the upper boxes, I could see her quite well.

"But 'desirable'—that's the word for the particular creak in the hinge of one's mind as it enfolds the beauty of such a person—desirable! You wanted to stretch out a long graceful arm above the heads of all the damn fools around you and catch her up, not by force, for she must yield; and then, as you brought her close to you, what happened would depend entirely on the sort of woman she was and the sort of man you were. . .

"Of course, one couldn't let this sort of thing go on without, anyway, trying to see about it. In the first *entr'acte*

I made a dash for that ginger-haired old boy by the box-office, and got him to send a page-boy with a note. It wasn't all done in a breath, for the note had obviously to be a note of the better sort, it had to convey a very particular impertinence which wasn't an impertinence simply because it was so particular; you must know what I mean. . . . Oh, it had to be just right! You must be neither too casual nor too ingratiating. You must not write it either in clogs or in carpet slipper, but in a happy mean, in the most exquisite pumps that were ever made by Lobb. You may think I'm exaggerating, but really I sweated blood over those few lines; how, how did one know that one might not miss the best thing of a lifetime by a *gauche* word! But I sent it off at last—the central idea of it being that I greatly desired the honour of her presence at supper, while apologising for my monstrous cheek, and that I was sitting in the third seat from the end of the third row of the stalls. . . . Which, by the way, reminds me! It always pays to take a stall, for imagine writing to a marvellous lady who may have spent her maid's quarterly wages on a box and saying that you are sitting in the dress-circle—the dress-circle, mind you! It sounds so odd—anyway, I breathe again when I think that I might have missed a perfect thing by sitting in the dress circle. One isn't being a snob, but an opportunist . . .

"I received my answer in the second interval . . . amazed, excited. Yes, she was a foreigner by her writing; just a couple of cold lines saying that I could call at her box at the end of the revue.

"Preliminaries are always tiresome, but these were perhaps less so than most, simply because one was so in the air about her, and so much readier than usual to be appreciative . . . and, mind you, rightly, as it proved. She spoke English charmingly well, but just incorrectly enough to be easily recognisable as a 'distinguished foreigner.'

"Almost on my entrance she began to apologise for her 'rudeness' at neither accepting nor declining my invitation to supper in her note.

"'But let's be amazingly candid,' I suggested, on her note. 'You wished, of course, to have a look at your host before——'

"'But no, I wished to have a look at my guest,' she

said, quickly. And by the slightest flutter in her voice I guessed for the first time that she was frightfully shy.

"'You must understand that I have a charming house,' she explained. 'And if you will not think me too insincere, I will say that I should be very flattered if you will take supper with me . . .'

"I was still standing. She had turned towards me in her chair, and was looking up at me. She smiled up at me, with a pretty pretence at pathos, and very lightly her fingers just touched my arm . . .

"'Please, will you not mind my depriving you of the pleasure of showing me how charming a host you can be? and anyway, it is so much more important for me to show you my qualities as a hostess. I have something of a reputation for that, I must warn you.'

"That quickly-found note of intimacy, how fascinating it is! This woman could turn a drawing-room into an adventure, and an adventure into a drawing-room, all by a particular quality of—what is it?—eye, voice, manner, ancestry? God knows! But all, all a snare and a delusion. . . .

"Her electric brougham took us away from the deserted theatre. I was too interested in my companion to notice where we were going. I had a vague idea of Piccadilly, that's all . . . She was very amusing. We had stepped off the ice too quickly, if indeed we had ever been on it, to get back to it in any way, and the twenty minutes or so of that gliding motion passed in one pleasant moment.

"'But perhaps you would prefer me to be haughty,' she said suddenly, 'or—how do you say—county? It would perhaps be more becoming in a woman who does not yet know the name of her guest?'

"'You drive me into a fatuous corner,' I said. 'For what can I answer but that you can well afford not to be county or any stuff of that kind?'

"She turned her eyes quickly to mine; suddenly, she was very serious.

"'You really, really mean that you do not think me—ah, it is very delicate!—well, you don't think me "cheap" for letting this happen, like this? But,' she laughed as suddenly, 'but forgive me,' she said. 'I was not trusting

my own judgment. . . . And, besides, you have said that your father is a Bishop!'

"It was as she was about to step out of the brougham that she said, 'It has a charm, our adventure. . . . You are so delightful a partner, you "play up." It is most unusual in men . . . And, perhaps, too, you are good at forgetting?'

"'Am I being threatened?' I had to ask.

"'But no, you are being trusted,' she said, very gently. . . . . I followed her into the house a little shamefacedly; taken, as it were, out of my stride. There seemed to be no tattered edges about this woman, there was a *finesse* about her every emotion and movement, it was as though every motive had been polished to perfection before it became articulate in word or gesture. She was deplorably civilised. . . . .

"The house was of the sort that one would have expected of her, though I can't specify what it was; and exactly where it was, as I've said, I didn't realise, though it couldn't have been a hundred miles away from Hyde Park Corner.

"I am not very good at describing rooms, so I can't tell you much more of the room into which I followed her than that it was large and seemed just right. What I mean is that I wasn't taking much interest in antique furniture at that moment, but if anything had been wrong or jarring in the room I would have noticed it at once—so it must have been a perfect room. Simplicity stunt on Howard de Walden lines, you know, with Whistler and Meryon etchings scattered here and there about the pale walls, and a certain suggestion of black and gold lacquer somewhere, which I can't now exactly place, unless it was a tall-boy or something of the kind.

"As we entered the room, and she was putting her cloak, white stuff and ermine, and other things on a chair, I saw particularly the glitter on the table which meant supper—and as she turned I suppose that I must too obviously have shown a hint of *gauche* surprise; and indeed I was surprised, for the table was laid for two! She had caught me out, and rather unfairly, and for a second the divine person watched me quite severely—a severity that amazingly broke into the most absolute and whole-hearted laugh that I've ever had

the misfortune and fortune to see on any face. Its abandon and gaiety were quite delightful, but I don't ever wish repeated the prickly discomfort of being so utterly laughed *at*, as she laughed at me so helplessly standing there . . . .

"But she mended it, a quick, simple gesture towards me simplified her into a, well, comrade.

"'Fool man!' she said. 'Did you really think that it was you who had—how d'you say it?—"picked me up"? Don't you know that it was decided that you should come to supper with me this morning, quite, quite early? Or someone like you, perhaps not so charming—but then I have been so lucky. . . . Are you very angry with me?'

"She was very close to me, smiling, intimate. Pure coquetry, of course—but what perfect *technique*! You knew that she was playing, but that did not prevent the blood rushing to your head; and she was so clean, so much 'one of ourselves'! Perhaps she expected me to kiss her at that moment; in fact, I could scarcely resist, for I always try to do what is expected of me; but I didn't kiss her then, for I felt it was the wrong moment, it would have to come about differently. Besides, I don't like your scrappy kisses . . . but she was waiting.

"'Anger isn't exactly one of my emotions at the moment,' I said, stupidly enough. 'But will you please be very gentle with me, madame, because never, never have I met anyone like you?'

"'I will make a note of that and refer to it when you make a fool of yourself. . . . Ah, but I know you very well, you are a cautious person who will make a fool of himself only when it would be folly to be wise.'

"She was close to me, it was dangerous, and I can only bear a certain amount, for my sort of restraint is due entirely to a desire for, well, greater efficiency. . . . But why will women do that, why will they step in where men fear to tread? I only speak from my own paltry experience, of course, but the only two real affairs I've had would have gone awry if the women had had their way, if it hadn't been for my mania for organisation. . . . But I couldn't stand there another second, holding my breath over that face, that scent. She was wearing an orchid, and an orchid takes its scent from a woman's body, you cannot really smell it except when it is entangled in a woman's breath. It

was an exquisite, damnable addition. I had to break loose . . . .

"'Encouraged as I am being to enter for the co-respondent stakes,' I said impertinently, 'I am being most awfully neglected as a guest.'

"The darling, how she laughed!

"Not then, nor later, did I see any servant about. But the table was admirably arranged. I am a commonplace enough person, I think of food in terms of *cantaloup* and *caviare* and damn the labour question; I suppose one would be a charming person if one had ten thousand a year. . . And so, though I would have been surprised if the supper had not been good, I was surprised that it was so good; for women, as you know, are rather bewildering in their choice of food,—generally I don't trust them,—but she—how well she had plumbed the particular male beastliness which I, anyway, affect! Oh, her age? About that of Mary Stuart when Darnley and Swinburne fell in love with her . . .

"It was as we sat down to supper that I really looked round the room for the first time, and noticed a full-length portrait in oils on a wall by the door: of a very distinguished-looking person indeed, in the toy uniform of some foreign cavalry—Italian, I imagined. But, gorgeously decorated and hilted as he was, his chest emblazoned with the ribands of orders (merited as much by his birth as by any action, one thought), there was a great air of distinction about the man which discounted as well as harmonised with his ridiculous trappings. The slim, perhaps too wasted, figure bore a thin, hawk-like face which, with its perfectly poised mixture of ferocity and courtesy, would have carried its fortunate owner as easily into the heart of any schoolboy as into the *boudoir* of the most unattainable lady; sweeping *moustachios* somehow added prominence to the long, delicate, very arched nose—surely the nose of a Roman, I ventured at the end of my long glance. And, as I turned to my hostess, she explained quickly that he was her husband. 'A very charming and decorative person,' she said, 'who apologises for neglecting me.'

"Over supper I began at last to lose my shyness, for I had been very nervous, you know. As one is . . . She had the quality of making one talk, of making one feel at one's best. Oh, that insinuating art of unuttered flattery!

" ' You are very terrible, you make me almost articulate,' I had to say, as we rose from the table. ' You see, the only really nice things about me are my admirations, and I admire you so unreservedly . . .'

" Perhaps it was just at that moment I first kissed her. Yes, it must have been then, for she had a way of accepting those shameless remarks with such an air of pretty surprise that I couldn't have resisted the impulse—anyway, I didn't want to, the thing could go its own divine way without any more officious restraint on my part.

" I found then that she had that rarest of generous gifts, the power of graceful admission. . . . You, old man, who have loved beautiful things must know how rare that is, how often one is jarred by that meanest sort of pride which denies, refuses to admit, the influence of another. Am I phrasing a sensation too absurdly if I say that I was *comfortable* with this woman whom I had known for less than two hours? And when I had kissed her, and kissed her again, for hers was not the riddle to be solved by one touch of the lips, the thing did not take on the air of a *liaison;* it was not a surprising and stolen pleasure, it was just natural.

" Slowly she unpinned her orchid and threw it among the elegant débris on the table.

" ' You crush orchids,' she said. She didn't smile. She looked up at me very thoughtfully.

" ' But you must know that this is all wrong,' she said. ' It should not have been like this. When I decided this morning that you must come to supper with me it was on the distinct understanding that you should not touch more than the tips of my fingers—and they were manicured so well this afternoon, too! Look . . . Oh, no, no! It is too late, now that you have crushed my orchid it is too late to be so deferential. And anyway, I did not intend that you should kiss even my hand until you were going away—and I imagined you going away very disappointed and full of quite pleasant regrets that I was a cold woman in spite, oh, in spite of everything! Come, Noël Anson, defend yourself. Give me reasons why you should not be disappointed. I am very serious.' And I realised that she was indeed serious.

" ' But why d'you say that?' I asked quickly. ' Must

the thing be exactly as you planned? Can't anything be altered—oh, I know that sounds fatuous, but when you look like that one feels helpless! I was right. You are very terrible.'

"'I *know*, that's all,' she said. And she slowly raised her arms and put her hands on my shoulders. 'Do not be a fool, Noël Anson,' she said, gently. 'Life is not so easy. There is no romance without reality. I am warning you, because I am afraid.'

"'And will you tell me when a warning has prevented a fool from being foolish? And besides, I like being a fool. And *I* am not afraid. . . I'm not even afraid of your answer if I ask whether you love me.'

"She laughed, but so lightly that she didn't break the tension—you know that infernal laugh?

"'But that is a leading question!' she protested.

"'And that is a dangerous way of answering it,' I had to say, though anything else would have done equally well, for I hadn't mind for words. . . She had lost her laugh and her eyes held mine. We stood there looking at each other . . . as men and women will when they know everything and nothing of each other . . . She was close to me, amazingly kissable! But I didn't. Instead, I picked her up in my arms and carried her to the door, and out into the strange hall, and up the strange wide staircase of this unknown house, up . . . .

"But if my impulse was to carry her, hers was certainly to let me. Do you understand that, or am I cheapening her to you? Oh, but one was so certain about her, it was so good to be with a woman with whom one could lose one's head and be certain that she wouldn't lose her dignity—until that moment when she, like everyone else, must become self-conscious. And the moment came, on the landing upstairs, when her fingers suddenly tightened round my arm. I let her stand, gently, and she whispered something, just two words, into my ear, but I didn't catch them, they are lost words . . . She opened a door.

"In there she suddenly turned on me, and shook my arm. A sudden, queer darkness about her face made me wonder if she was angry.

"'Oh, you are so inevitable, aren't you!' she was crying, but the exclamation ended surprisingly in the air, somehow

so high up in the air that I've never yet been able to bring it definitely down to earth and discover its meaning, unless it was that—I don't know. . . She was so strange, so different from the other women who had filled and emptied one's life, and it was difficult to tell her moods from her emotions. But there was nothing spurious nor counterfeit about her, she was not unreal; she wasn't even the closely-knit but far-away dream that beautiful women sometimes become in those terrifying, intimate moments. She was the most essentially feminine woman that I've ever met, she was so real. . . . That white oval face with the large, so large and so articulate, eyes, set in a mass of soft black Southern hair which I myself had unpinned and let fall over her shoulders despite a shy murmur from her—why, desire is a cheap word to express the passion to possess that, the living symbol of the loveliest woman of all time! Yes, yes, I was supremely ridiculous. I still am. . . .

"A second or a century later, at the end of a long, long silence, for me an infinity of happiness, she moved her head away from me, and asked me to light her a cigarette. I gave it to her, and waited. I knew so well, you see, what was coming. I had been watching her, I had made a feast of all the movements of that amazing face. It was a sad face, wonderfully alive, but sad; and its sadness became fixed, her eyes were large and held no curiosity at all; I noticed the lack of curiosity in them because I am so used to meeting it in women—they want to find out! But she, perhaps, in her splendid conceit, had found out, she *knew*, and she was sad—had she not said downstairs that she knew? I didn't care then whether she knew or not, for then life was before me, the present and the future were in exquisite certainty; but now, as I waited and watched her draw her cigarette, I looked back on that future, and was really terrified of the present. There are moments of ice-clear sanity in all of us—you must know those moments?—when you realise with helpless vividness what you can and what you cannot do, what you simply cannot alter. And so with this moment and this woman; she was inexorable. I could not alter her, I could do nothing but wait—for the epilogue to that prelude played long ago downstairs, when she had put her hands on my shoulders and told me that she was warning me. . . .

"'But perhaps you will think me very vain?' she asked at last, very quietly.

"'Because you are thinking you will make me wretched by what you are going to say?'"

"'Oh, you are too quick!' she murmured. And she raised her head on her elbow and looked at me. 'Dear Noël Anson,' she said, 'our lives go different ways. To-day we had never met, and to-morrow it must be as though we had never met; for life is not a romance, it is a reality, and it is much stronger than our—inclinations? And even if I loved you it would be the same; I should be saying what I am saying now, because in me there is something much stronger than love, much more inevitable. . . Please, you must believe me, it will hurt me if you do not believe me. I am not playing any more. I do not play with memories of crushed orchids, because it is only fools who think there is no pleasure in being serious . . . just sometimes.

"'It is no use for me to say any more,' she said, 'because if you like me very much then, anyway, you will be bitter about me—and if you do not like me very much, then you will only think me (how is it?) an odd sort of woman. . . . I command you, and I put you on your honour to obey, that when you leave this house you will go into the brougham waiting for you without looking to see the number of the house, nor the name of the street, so that you will never see me again. . . . But it is now very, very late. You must go, Don Noël, you must go! And take with you my blessing—Adieu!'

"But I can only repeat her words to you barely and crudely. I can't hope to give you the tragic gesture of impotence in her voice, and the way her voice grew lighter and lighter until it seemed to become part of the air, as impalpable, as mysterious. . . . At the end her voice had died down to almost less than a whisper, her 'adieu' had fainted between her tongue and her lips, it was only a wisp of a dying word. It was strangely as though she were rehearsing something she might have to say sometime . . . She was only rehearsing. I waited.

"'Oh, but isn't that enough!' she almost cried, suddenly. 'Have I not done it quite, quite well, or do you

want me to think of something else—something more . . . more dramatic?'

"'Please, please, do make it easy for me, Don Noël—go away, please!' she begged. 'This is so difficult, so much more difficult than I . . . It is not a tragedy, this, remember! It is an incident, and the incident is finished—that's all. Don't, please, let me make a tragedy of it—by apologising! You see, my Noël, I am so weak, so weak. I feel such a bad woman, such a brute . . . and you can never understand why, never . . . forgive me, and go!'

"Her very last word was almost brutal in its defined meaning, it held no uncertainty; but I didn't move at that moment. I remembered that I did not know her name.

"'A few moments ago, before you spoke, I had a dream,' I said. 'And in my dream I was told that you would tell me your name, the name that will explain the initials under the coronet on your hair-brushes. The adventure would not have been so complete without a coronet, so I looked to see if it was there, and behold! it was there. I am such a snob, I would like to know your name . . . and then I would forget it.'

"'That was a false dream,' she said. 'You will not know my name, you will not know where this house is, you will not know anything. Don Noël, you will be an English gentleman of the kind we find in books, you will not remember or know anything that I do not wish. You will not look at the number of the house, nor at the name of the street. That is my wish.'

"She was quite, quite cold. Just like a woman who has had a love affair which has lasted a year but cannot outlast another hour. How wise she was to let me see that—oh, well, anti-climax! She knew that men do not fall of their own accord from great heights down to Mother Earth, they must be pushed over—ever so gently, gently.

"'It is getting light,' she murmured.

"But as I rose she confessed her affectation; she threw her arms round my neck and brought my face close to hers.

"'You fool man!' she said. 'Why do you hurt yourself and me? Why do you just say that this was an adventure? This has not been an adventure, it has been a love-affair. . . . And always remember that I asked you to forgive me. Always.'

"When I was at the door I had to turn round. I had feared this moment of going, and I had made up my mind to go quickly and be done with it. But I make a bad actor, and artistic effects can go to the devil for all I care. With my hand on the knob I had to turn round.

"'I can't go like this,' I said. And I walked back across the room, and looked down on her. 'I can't. It seems wrong,' I said.

"'Perhaps, then, it was not worth it?' she asked, so tentatively!

"'It will always have been worth it. . . But there *is* something missing, isn't there?'

"'But, of course, Don Noël! There is much missing, for it is an unfinished romance which will never be finished. You do not understand—this is life! I know. You are a baby, like all really nice men, and you want a piece of chocolate to eat as you go away,' she said. 'Bring your head down—yes, down, down, Noël—and I will give it to you. . . . Listen, you! It is decided that you will never see me again, is it not? And that you will keep your promise not to look where this house is, so that you will never, never find me again? But, my dear, will you please believe that I am ver' sorry, that I would like to see you many, many times before this stupid "good-bye." For it is not every day that people like you and I meet; we could laugh and cry so well together. . . . A long time ago, as we came into this house, I asked you if you were good at forgetting. But you have been such a dear that I now give you permission to remember—me! And that is the end of my vanity and your love-affair, Don Noël, for now you go away, out of the house into the night from which you came—oh, so wonderfully! Go—adieu, adieu.'

"And this time I did not turn round at the door, but went out of the room and out of the house, into the pale darkness of the early morning. The squat shape of the electric brougham was there waiting for me; but the bent figure of the man in the driving-seat seemed asleep. He certainly did not hear me until I was opening the door of the cab, when I gave him my direction. And I stepped in. The thing glided softly away, and I lay back and closed my eyes. . . . I don't know how what I've told you has impressed you. I may indeed have made the thing seem farcical; it had begun

as a, well, casual adventure, it had ended—ended! with me sitting back in her brougham, seriously, abjectly miserable! My feeling was one of deadly and unutterable flatness—just that. From my own lips had come a promise that I would let something go, something which I wanted more than anything else in the world, something which would never come back! I would never see her again! Everything but that one agonising certainty was in utter blankness. I was very flat, everything was grey.

"The brougham soon drew up at my door in Mount Street. I got out and stood by the footboard, rather absent-mindedly fumbling in my pocket for a pound note to give to this obviously very confidential chauffeur. He was still huddled up in his seat, his peaked cap well over his eyes, his coat-collar turned up over half his face. Only his nose was really visible, and that dimly; I was vaguely staring at it as I picked out a note, a little intrigued by the fellow's utter lack of interest in me. I had only stood there, say, four seconds or so; he hadn't looked at me once, wasn't even going to wait for the tip, for I saw that he was releasing the lever to move off—when, suddenly, staring at that nose, I realised with a shock that I had seen it before. The car was almost in motion when I said, sharply, amazedly:

"'But you've shaved off your moustache!'

"The car stopped. The man deliberately got up, and stood on the pavement beside me. I am pretty tall, but he was even taller. I could see his face clearly now—yes, it was he, looking almost cadaverous without his sweeping moustachios, but still very distinguished. He was smiling at me, with a strange urbanity.

"'This is very awkward,' he said, or rather murmured; his accent and voice were distinctly foreign.

"'Very,' I agreed, hotly. I was angry, shocked. 'It's so awkward that I wonder how you put up with it.'

"'I can do one of two things,' he went on, ignoring my bad temper, but looking intently at me. 'I can either kill you, or I can explain.'

"He looked about forty, and there was a courteous and fatherly air about him which I found intensely irritating. But any manner would have been irritating in my absurd position.

"'You have a perfect right to do the first, of course,' I

rapped out. 'But may I suggest that you do both, and the explaining first, if you don't mind. I think I'm rather entitled to one, don't you?'

"He considered me for a moment.

"'As you will, then,' he conceded. 'If you will get back into the cab I will explain in there. I have found the night air rather chilly.'

"His manner infected me. 'If you will accept my hospitality for a moment, please come inside. And perhaps a little fire-water . . .' I suggested vaguely.

"He accepted my invitation with a bow, and followed me in. In the sitting-room he unbuttoned his heavy coat, and stood with his back to the empty grate; a tall, slim, decorative, and dangerous gentleman. He made me feel like a baby in arms, but I stifled my irritation. I poured out two stiff whiskies.

"'Only a touch of soda, thanks,' he answered my inquiry. 'It was clever of you to recognise me by my nose,' he said. 'But the Casamonas have been proud of their noses for so long that I, the last of them, find it a little hard to have to conceal mine even for a few minutes. And as for my moustache, to the absence of which you referred so pointedly, that has been gone for some time. That portrait of me which you saw was painted a long time ago, and since then I have become subject to colds in the head. And I found that my moustachios became frequently *malsoignés* after the continual application, however delicate, of a handkerchief. I begin to concede that there may, after all, be some defence for that "tooth-brush" parody of a moustache which you, *par exemple*, can so charmingly affect.'

"No, he wasn't laughing at me. He was just talking courteously on about whatever had come first. But I couldn't bear it.

"'Eh,—about that little matter,' I said, absurdly, feeling more and more like a tradesman.

"'Yes, of course,' he instantly agreed. He drained his glass, put it delicately down on the table, and then turned to me.

"'If you will forgive a pointed question—did you keep your promise not to look where the house was?'

"I had given up being irritated; it was clearly no use.

"'Of course I did,' I answered, abruptly.

"'Good, you are exactly like all the other English gentlemen in Mr. Oppenheim's novels who always lose secret documents and find beautiful wives. I envy them, and you—but, my dear sir, I do wish you were a little more wicked and human.'

"'Are you complaining of my being too good?' I burst out, amazed.

"He saw the point, and for the first time really laughed.

"'I see that I must get to my explanation quickly,' he apologised. 'May I sit down? Thank you. . . That lady, as you have guessed, is my wife. Or, more correctly, she was my wife until two years ago. Since when she has been so only in name. I use the language of convention, so that you may more quickly understand me. . . She loved me, but she ceased to love me. It happens thus. And though I love her still, it is without fire or passion; it is not the love of a possessor, but of a *connoisseur*. I love her as I love a vase, a marble, any really beautiful thing. You understand? . . . We married four years ago, in Paris. She is of the best Sicilian blood, but a rebel, an aristo in revolt. We met without the formal courtesies of an introduction—if I may draw a parallel, as you and she met a few hours ago. And again, since I am as sensitive a person as yourself—it is our charm, my dear sir—the same happened to me four years ago as to you to-night. The night took wings, and carried us away to the very pinnacles of wonderful adventure—she and I, king and queen of more than one world! To the very pinnacles of that enchanting adventure towards which the poets and philosophers of ages have been vainly scrambling, the adventure for which Troy was sacked and Trafalgar won. You, too, have been on those heights, and you know. In most men's lives those heights are never attained, but you and I have been supremely fortunate. I regret nothing . . Night became morning, romance became life. The adventure ended. And I found myself in the street, with her last command ringing in my ears, not to look where the house was, to forget—everything! The Seine seemed alluring to my agony. . . But I am Italian, I have at least the courage of my passions, and so I broke my promise. . . I called the very next afternoon. And how can I express to you, even now, my great surprise at the warmness of my

reception! For the fingers with which I had given the *concierge* my card had trembled with fear—had she not commanded me never to see her again! But it needed only one second of her presence to soothe my fear, she was so gay, so cordial, so quite delighted to see me! No word of any promise, no word of last night, passed her lips—we had met before, that is all! But we were not long together before another joined us—a short, *chic* little man, of an agreeable air. As he came towards us I wondered if this was yet one more slave of this marvellous lamp, but she introduced him to my bewilderment as her husband. And then—imagine it—presented me to him as her future husband! All in the most casual and unostentatious way, as though she were performing a mere formality; and as such, indeed, this amazing husband accepted it. For instead of knocking me down, he bowed politely, and took my hand. As for her, I didn't dare look at her, I was so embarrassed. But when at last, as tea was served, I did look, she smiled at me, and I knew that her smile was to say, "This is your punishment for breaking your oath. I am sorry. . . ." The husband did not stay for more than five minutes; obviously he did not wish to intrude. But before he left us he turned to me, and, with the most charming deference, said: "You will find everything arranged. Madame will explain. . . I beg you to accept my sincerest wishes for your happiness." And then his lips touched her fingers, and he left us—to let himself be divorced, so that Madame could marry me, who had never dared even to dream of such supreme happiness. And so it was that we married.

"'I am sorry to be so tiresome and detailed, but the worst is over. For the rest of my tale is a commonplace in the history of the world—you realise? She tired of me. Gently, but remorselessly. As such wonderful women will, you know. It is no use fighting—no man, neither Hector, nor Adonis, nor Machiavelli, can supply the deficiencies of the sphinx. She smiles and says "No," she says "No" even to the wisdom of Solomon, and besotted man sprawls at her feet and murmurs frantically that, anyway, it is better to be miserable about her than to be happy about anyone else. . . Yes, my friend, men have been known to say that to women. I myself have said it more than once, but I only believed it once. That was two years ago. But it was

no use, her love was as dead as though it had never been—I was a man, I had become a god, and now I was a man again. And so the revolt of man ended in submission, and I had to acquiesce in her mere affection for me—that affection with which all splendid women enshroud their dead loves. . . .

" ' You see, such women as she make their own laws. It is not her fault, nor her arrogance; it is ours, who are so consistently susceptible. Physically she belongs to the universe, not to one single man. She never belonged to me; I was just an expression of the world to her. She has never belonged to anyone; she never will—for she is in quest of the ideal, which even she will never find. And so she will go on, testing our—our quality and breaking our hearts. Men have killed themselves because of her, poor dear, and I, too, would have considered it seriously if I had not found that she ranked suicide high in the list of supreme impolitenesses from men to women.

" ' I had suggested that she should divorce me, but she would not do that, for she complained of a nervous fear of being left alone in a house. We were in Rome then, and we could envisage no possible husband for her from among our acquaintance, so she begged me to continue in my capacity for a while. Of course, I was only too pleased. . . In the end we hit upon the only way out of the *impasse*—that she should do what she had, " so successfully," she sweetly said, done before, and risk the adventure; and if the young man was acceptable, and broke his solemn promise, and came to see her, then he would be made to suffer the penalty of his weakness—happy, wretched youth! But I would not let her take the risk without some guarantee as to her safety, for even adventures sometimes become unpleasant, and so I insisted that I should be her chauffeur for the occasion; and from beginning to end of the adventure, I insisted. To which she replied, smiling, that it would not always be the same. " You will not be kept waiting long," she said.

" 'And it happened as she said, for in the two adventures before this of yours I was indeed not kept waiting long. Not for more than an hour, in fact. In each case the young man had a good supper and left immediately after, wondering how this most unattainable of women had ever come,

so informally, to invite him. The first happened in Vienna, the second in Paris. They bored her utterly to death, she told me. And thus the occasion for the promise, the pivot of the adventure, as you realise, never arose in those two cases. But in yours, the third. . . .'

"'Yes?' I asked, eagerly.

"'The night air was certainly chilly,' he demurred, gently.

"He was silent for a few long minutes. I waited intently. And then he leaned forward towards me, and put a hand lightly on my knee.

"'Young man, will you forgive an impertinence?' His eyes held in them the kindliest light; my silence answered them, and he continued: 'I am perhaps twelve or thirteen years older than you, so I may be allowed the liberty of advising you—about something in which I am an expert. Never, never try to find the house to which you went a few hours ago—never, I say! And I say it because I like you, and because I know that she is the most enchanting woman in the world; and if *she* likes you, so she is the more enchanting—and the more dangerous! as she was dangerous to me. . . You forgive the liberty I have taken?' He let his quite solemn speech balance in the air for a long pause, then got up, and, very lazily, stretched his arms over his head. And a delightful, intimate smile passed across his lean face—the man had a large share of the divine essence of childishness. 'You know your *Trilby?*' he asked, lightly, and murmured into the air:

"'"Hélas! Je sais un chant d'amour,
Triste et gai, tour à tour!"'[1]

"As he went to the door I sat on in my chair; circumstances somehow waived aside common politeness. I just stared after him—to meet his eyes, for from the door he turned round just to say:

"'I did not mean to jeer at your honesty in keeping your promise to Madame—please never think that. On the contrary, I sincerely admire you—and congratulate you. For you have avoided a marvellous misery. . . Good-night, Sir Lancelot, adieu!'"[2]

The Italian's exit seemed to bring Noël Anson's tale to an end, and yet it had come so abruptly that I could not but

wait for a final ending. But he threw the end of his cigarette into the dying fire, and continued silent.

"And so you never saw her again, and lived unhappily ever after?" I suggested at last. But I wasn't prepared for his quick, pitying stare. He heaved himself up from his chair.

"You damn fool!" he said. "Didn't I tell you all through dinner that I was divorced six months ago!"

"But your promise—you told him——"

"The first thing I did when I left that house," he explained, firmly, "was to look round at the number on the door. . . ."

Confined as a Lunatic (iii)

By "Oxonian"

The time allowed for outdoor exercise was so limited that the engagement of a Special Attendant was a practical necessity in a large number of cases. (For these "specials," although they took part in the work of the other servants, and were only available at certain hours for their "cases," the fees of highly-trained nurses were charged.) The large number of these young servant-girls added greatly to the disquiet of the ward; and the authority they enjoyed increased immeasurably the bitter sense of indignity and ignominy which constitutes so large a part of asylum "treatment." Frequently as many as seven of these girls would sit the whole of a wet afternoon on a large sofa just outside my bedroom door. And as one's bedroom was the only place where a limited degree of peace and privacy could be hoped for, and as no door was allowed to be closed during the daytime, the irritation of the incessant clatter of common voices often became intense, especially if a preceding bad night had resulted in severe headache. And in many other ways, too numerous to mention, the unnatural predominance of the servant element in our lives was a misery which can scarcely be imagined. It is true that among these girls were several whose kindliness covered all defects. But "it is a bad thing for those not trained to authority to have control, without proper supervision, over others who have been in a higher station. . . And everything was under rigorous, frost-bound rule."

"Rigorous, frost-bound rule" must eventually break the human spirit. Sometimes it seemed as if doctors and servants rejoiced in that cruel fact, sometimes compunction seemed to grip them, and more than once some unexpected kindness has startled me almost to tears. On one occasion I waylaid Dr. Marks on his way from the tennis-courts, where he regularly spent the afternoon in fine weather, and implored him to give me some strong

antiseptic for my throat, which had become inflamed through the poisonous smell of paint. (The whole front was being painted in the hottest week of the summer.) He questioned me with a kindly sympathy, and upon my telling him that I was subject to quinsies, he promised that he would have my room thoroughly disinfected before bedtime, which he did. And I found that he had given special instructions to the night attendant in case I was wakeful.

The days became less intolerable as intimacy with some of my companions increased. And it was an intense satisfaction to be able, by dictating a few discreet letters, to change for the better the wretched situation of a beautiful and gifted girl, whose parents had consigned her to a fate which they were incapable of realising, in the hope of curing her of a troublesome form of hysteria. Her doctor was one of a very large number who, recognising their inability to deal with any sort of nervous disorder, wash their hands of all responsibility by "concluding" (on a Certificate of Insanity) that "she is a person of unsound mind."

But though this and other friendships provided some amelioration of the long miseries of the day, the strain of sleepless nights became more and more unbearable. I was given a mild sleeping-draught almost every night, but it rarely had much effect. We were allowed a light in our rooms for nearly an hour after our doors were locked for the night. The electric switches were outside the doors, and at the sound of the attendant's footstep in the distance, as she tramped along turning out these lights, my heart would begin to beat uncontrollably, and a great dread, that made my shoulders ache, took possession of me. Many think they know the horrors of insomnia, but it is to be doubted whether any who have not been certified insane and have then lived, sane, through months of treatment as a lunatic, can form any adequate conception of what insomnia can be at its worst. The knowledge that every sleepless hour not only prolongs the sentence that has been passed, but brings actual insanity nearer, gives monstrous dimensions to anxiety. Sleep becomes a miracle, and miracles are rare. A clock that chimed the quarters warned me three times every night of the approach of the night attendant—at 12, 2, and 5. And I would lie trembling and

quivering, my brain hammering with apprehension. And whenever in a brief snatch of oblivion the sound of her entrance awoke me, resentment at that insane disturbance with its intolerable costs became an emotion of such dire intensity as often to verge upon madness.

Some of the nights, too, brought the added horrors of air-raids. Terror was then indeed at its fiercest. Not the terror of death—death in the sane free world would have been welcome as an angel of deliverance. But death in a lunatic asylum, trapped, branded, degraded! Soul and spirit writhed and revolted against all this wanton devilry!

And as the screams of frightened prisoners mingled with the crashes of the bombs, a fearful sudden desire made me thrust my face hard into the pillows—the desire to shriek and shriek till reason should be destroyed, and with it the power to suffer.

"Who's on Miss Duncan? Do make her hurry up!" It was one of the coarser-looking servants who bawled out the words, as we stood crowded together against the first of the three locked fretwork doors of the beautiful staircase of Ward I. Miss Duncan's "Special" brought up her charge at last, and we advanced by degrees, as permitted, till we were all assembled at the long table in the handsome hall. For the first time I noticed a streak of grey in Miss Duncan's red-gold hair, and her face looked grey, too, as she stared listlessly at the unappetising plate before her. Without thinking, I asked sympathetically what had hurt her hand—I saw in that moment that the red marks were the imprints of teeth. She warily lowered her hand and touched my knee under the table—the signal that the conversation must be changed.

I had a great admiration for Miss Duncan. A brilliant linguist and musician, a witty conversationalist, a handsome woman of strong personality, she was among the most tragic figures of that tragic throng. She was probably there for life, for she was convinced that she had been hypnotised into a certain indiscreet action which had rendered her "impossible" to her relatives, and there had been no difficulty in finding doctors to prescribe "treatment." She was becoming more and more nerve-ridden, through devastating indignation and anxiety; and insomnia

and drugs had left their ravages on her face. Her ultimate fate was past contemplation.

I was glad when the cry went down the corridors: "Dress for walking, please." For I knew she would join me, and we could talk freely, with her Special at a discreet distance. It was five minutes before she spoke, and we had reached a point of the spacious grounds where yesterday the first of the great lilacs had stabbed me with its beauty. Miss Duncan stopped, and said unsteadily: "The lilac trees were out when I first came here, two years ago yesterday. Last night that lilac brought me so near to crying that I had to set my teeth in my wrist to stop the tears. For I show the signs of weeping for hours afterwards, and I have been too many times punished for that—sent down to the Infirmary, the Inferno, the lowest circle but one. You know yourself what that is. All this torment, all this beautiful torment"—(her slender, nervous hand swept out caressingly towards the trees)—"is a paradise compared with that unspeakable hell." There was a pause again, and we walked on, and presently sat down on a rustic seat, and watched the aeroplanes circling, neither daring to speak aloud the aching thoughts of liberty they stirred in us. A servant's voice broke up our reverie: "Time to go in, please," and Miss Duncan's Special was "on" her at once. She rose wearily. "How many more years shall I see the lilacs blossom here? Oh, to scream and be free!"

* * * * *

The tears had their way that afternoon—she was found weeping convulsively on one of the luxurious sofas at the far end of our corridor, and the doctor's dictum arrived speedily, that she would be better for a day or two in bed in the Infirmary. The scene of her departure will stand luridly in my memory for ever. This was "treatment," this purposeless, endless secret agony, hidden away from the unthinking world. Again my own deep torment faded before the fiercer torment that I saw. But the little doctor of our section, though unintelligent and uneducated, was not without understanding of a kind, and he must have seen that her punishment was greater than she could bear. In two days she reappeared. Her face was whiter and more rigid now, and she told me that she was desperate—

that she was going to try to escape. I saw she was utterly unstrung. I tried to make her realise the madness of such a venture, and the more patent madness of speaking about it. But it was all in vain.

* * * * *

She had not reached the first low fence when she was detected and brought back. All her little hard-won "privileges" were over for ever now. She was taken that night to the Infirmary, and afterwards to one of the "Back Wards." I never saw her again.

The June afternoon was glorious, and on the great cricket-field the band was playing jubilantly. We were entertaining the local police at a match. We often entertained them—not without excellent results. They had formed a very high opinion of our "Hospital," and the indisputable statement that Dr. Winton was a "perfect gentleman" was used frequently by the Chief Constable as a clinching argument if any suspicious inquiry was brought to his doors. Only a certain number of the "patients" were present—those who knew how to behave themselves.

I sat down on one of the benches, occupied only by the bent figure of an unfrocked Canon, who looked sadly out of the picture; for the picture on the whole was gay and bright and genial—there was no denying it—and a "Sursum Corda" feeling had momentarily possessed me. The old man gave me a quavering smile, and drew a photograph from his breast-pocket. "I'm glad you've come," he said; "I wanted to show you this." It was a handsome young soldier, his only child.

I saw that my fellow prisoner was caught in some strong emotion, and I hoped—ah, how I hoped!—that it was the Great Silence that had fallen between these two, not the silence of that legal death that had overtaken him and me. "He is dead?" I questioned presently, and the old man nodded. "He was so kind to his old father," he said brokenly. "I have prayed to be allowed to see his grave."

The Superintendent came up behind us and patted the Canon's shoulder. "Come, sir," he said, genially, "I am afraid you missed that catch—it was worth seeing. Take

my advice and watch that lad. And you must try my latest—my boy has just brought them from Egypt." He handed his cigarettes with a pleasing gesture, and my companion faltered. Then he took one, and the doctor left us.

Oh, the pitiless ache of it all! The searing shame of it all! The hourly torment mounting to stark terror when the dark incredible vision of the future rose up before one's writhing soul!

Across my lurid dream the strangled voice broke passionately: "He thinks a pat on the shoulder and a cigarette can make up to me for being here," it said; "for living here, for dying here, for never seeing where my boy lies buried."

Supper was over by 8 o'clock ("Summer Time"), just when the beauty of the July evening was beginning, and we were marshalled back into our ward on the ground-floor. In half an hour the servants would call out, "Bed-time, please," and by 9 o'clock we should all be in our beds, locked in for the night, watching with a strange sense of utter separation the free and happy figures that sauntered past our windows. The doctors and the chaplain, their womenfolk and visitors, the servants and others, would enjoy the beauty of the waning sunshine, as they strolled in groups and talked and laughed together. We should watch their enjoyment from our prison beds.

A thin whimpering cry put a stop to Marjorie Payne's recital of her brother's exploits at the Front. A fragile, aristocratic-looking old lady was being dragged to the bathroom by four attendants, past the sofa on which we were sitting. A feeble babbling sound came continuously from her parted lips, and the dim eyes were wide with terror—though nothing in the handling of the attendants suggested unnecessary force. She was being moved quickly, half pushed, half carried, and as she passed us the toneless sound became articulate: "Help me! Help me!" Marjorie's ice-cold hand clutched my wrist, and she pressed her head against my shoulder, hiding the sight. "She thinks the Germans have got her!" she said, hoarsely. "They say she was made mad in Belgium, but it was her son who put her here." Suddenly she slid to the floor, and flung her quivering young body across my

knees, gripping me convulsively. "I can't bear it!" she sobbed wildly. "Oh, mother, mother—if it was *my* mother!"

One of the servants spoke authoritatively to her, and she "controlled herself."

* * * * *

Two years later Mrs. Milner's body, so covered with bruises that the Coroner adjourned the inquest for a special inquiry, was "identified by her son" in another asylum.* She had been moved out of a padded cell just before her death. She was seventy-seven years old.

Did the stricken soul of that forsaken mother, as well as her feeble body, feel bruises in that last dread hour before the Order for Release arrived? "Made mad in Belgium." The pen of a Dickens, a Hugo or a Loti might attempt such a death-bed scene. But I doubt if these dark tragedies of twentieth-century England could be comprehended by any except—such as myself.

As the weeks wore on my chances of regaining my liberty receded. I was rapidly coming in sight of the "nervous breakdown," which is the inevitable result of The System upon ninety per cent. of such as myself—the "inconvenient relatives" who find their way, sane, into a so-called Mental Hospital. I was nearing the abyss. "In these places nothing is lacking to push one over the edge." The crushing anguish of the long monotonous days, with their endless wasting anxieties, humiliations and terrors; the poignant misery of the sleepless nights, when prostration left one powerless to silence the throbbing memories of treachery, injustice and tyranny, and the writhing sense of a branded future (even if freedom were regained); these sufferings leagued together and multiplied, till their magnitude and intensity forged new and ever stronger fetters, and despair became a saner thing than hope.

I found that on the mornings following any entirely sleepless night the effort to dress myself was becoming intolerable. I would find myself at my dressing-table unable to call to mind the next little step to be taken. And during the day I was unable to read—my attention refused

* See the *Daily Chronicle* paragraph, October 10th, 1919, "Made Mad in Belgium."

to concentrate itself. "Up and down the corridors of my brain thought, timeless and formless, passed like a rodent flame." My will-power was deserting me, and a fearful, semi-physical pain would descend upon me suddenly at all hours of the day and night. I became terrified. I asked for fresh sleeping-draughts, and was allowed them. (I did not realise their deadly effect till long afterwards.) They acted at first, and I felt a little better. On one of these "good" days I stopped Dr. Marks, who was hurrying down the ward, and taking my courage desperately in my hands I asked him, in Mrs. Beresford's presence, when it was proposed to release me. He answered promptly: "Anyone can be free as soon as they regain their sanity." Then the following dialogue took place:

I (*trying to smile*). Then you consider me insane, to-day?

Dr. Marks (*smiling back*). Yes, I do.

I (*under the effect of an awful shock, but, to my surprise, easily controlling my voice*). Could you mention any symptom of insanity that I am displaying?

Dr. Marks. Well, you worry about not sleeping, and that is a well-known symptom of insanity.

I. If I write that statement to the *Daily Graphic*,* will it be allowed to be posted?

Dr. Marks. I can't say. But you can try. Only don't misrepresent what I have said. I say that your desire for sleep is *unnatural*, and therefore a symptom of insanity.

I. But would not most people consider it *natural*? Cannot a doctor realise the torment of insomnia, especially to one in my awful situation? Do you remember what Shakespeare says of sleep? "Balm of hurt minds, great *Nature's* second course, chief nourisher at life's feast."

Dr. Marks (*impatiently*). Anyhow, Shakespeare is no authority on insanity. (*I demur.*) And I've told you before, there's far too much "I, I, I" in your conversation. (*Exit.*)

So I was there for life! For some hours despair froze me into an almost painless stupor of mind. But that evening, as I walked into my misery-haunted bedroom, Mrs. Beresford slipped her arm through mine, and the sympathetic touch broke up the stony surface of my despair. I fell on the bed, and for the first time in all those awful weeks I wept. She sat by me, reminding me gently but firmly that tears in that place were "symptoms of insanity." Dr. Marks had recently found her crying, and had said at once: "We shouldn't like to have to certify you." In my case they would mean almost certainly some form of punishment and degradation. Even that could

* An article had appeared in the *Daily Graphic*, June 13th, 1917: "Sane Men Certified on Curious Evidence."

not wholly stop the tempest that had overtaken me, for nothing seemed to matter now. She sat with me till the attendants came round to lock the rooms for the night, and she told me her own story.

A year ago her husband had become infatuated with another woman, and the circumstances of her life had become inconceivably shameful. After ten months of endurance she had taken a large overdose of laudanum, but it had proved insufficient for her purpose. Her husband had seized the opportunity, and secured the ready promise of her doctor to certify her insane unless she consented to "place herself under treatment" as a voluntary boarder at the chosen "Mental Hospital." (No doctor can attempt to pass a verdict of "Guilty but Insane" in the case of murder. But because in the case of attempted suicide this illegal procedure—illegal even under our present Lunacy Laws—can be carried out *in secret*, with the certainty, too, of public exoneration even if it should become known, many doctors can be found willing to perpetrate this hideous cruelty and wrong.) She had since learned that two local doctors with interests in the "Hospital" could be relied upon to certify Voluntary Boarders under these circumstances if they showed any desire to take advantage of their legal position. The necessary "contrivances" were perfectly simple—the legal document could be "proved" later to have been a mistake—and the torment of anxiety entailed upon the victim could not fail to induce certain "well-known symptoms of insanity" to give the necessary colour to the forthcoming certificates.

* * * *

I was alone now, facing the endless night. Sleep was murdered—the Voice cried very plainly, "Sleep no more." But again two spells of merciful light-headedness came to blunt the edge of pain. The violent shuddering subsided. But after a time something gave way in me, and I felt myself sinking finally into the abyss—certain spasmodic twitchings now defied control. But these grim heralds brought a new courage in their train, the courage that so many think they know, the courage of complete despair. In the early dawn I rose and sat at my window for an hour. I planned a desperate venture.

I owe my freedom to that hour.

Worse than War

By May Sinclair

It has been brought back to me very vividly, a certain evening in the restaurant of the Hôtel de la Poste in Ghent when Antwerp was falling. Outside, under the trees in the Place d'Armes, the refugees huddled together or dragged themselves shuffling through the dust, aimless, restless, hopeless. Inside, at the table of the restaurant, my neighbour, the War Correspondent, tormented himself. He wanted a title for his article—a title that should draw the eyes and hearts of the whole civilised world.

What did I think of "The Spectre Worse than War"?

I told him what I thought of it. Too sensational, too crude, and at the same time too mouldy.

But he stuck to it. He was haunted by his Spectre. While the German shells battered the forts of Antwerp, he saw it stalk over the battlefields and through the hospitals of France and Belgium: Pestilence, ten times more horrible than War.

That was in October, 1914. I never saw my War Correspondent again. Before he could mature his scheme for entering Brussels under the bayonets of the enemy he was swept out of Ghent in the great retreat. He left me his title. I daresay he hasn't used it. For the things he thought would happen never did, even in five years of war. Not, that is to say, where he saw them happen—in Far Western Europe.

Yet the event has justified him.

Yesterday he came back to me, after six years, as I read the reports of the Commissions of Relief in Middle Europe and the Near East. Early in 1919, throughout Germany and German Austria and Hungary, in the Balkans, in Turkey and Armenia, in Poland and in Russia his nightmare became reality.

"In the last years of the war in Austria alone at least 35,000 people died of tuberculosis, in Vienna alone 12,000. To-day we have to reckon with a number of at least 350,000 to 400,000 people who require treatment for tuberculosis,

and with at least 800,000 people who are subjected to the greatest risk through living with the invalids. . . ." "A bloodless generation is growing up with undeveloped muscles, with undeveloped joints, with undeveloped brains. A people is going to destruction before our eyes."*

In Czecho-Slovakia, in 1919, our Allies were still dying from starvation and exhaustion. "There are a million young children totally deprived of milk supplies. . . In the hospitals and institutions 80 per cent. are suffering from tuberculosis. . . . In the industrial districts 50 per cent. of the infants are still-born."†

In Eastern Poland, "utter misery and starvation. Inquests on many victims of death from hunger reveal in the stomach the presence of sand and wood. In many communities as many as half the population have perished, while in many others a very large percentage are suffering from hunger typhus."‡ Again, in Poland and Lithuania, "hundreds and thousands of the people are getting as their daily sustenance a dish of soup consisting of water, with one-third of a medium-sized potato in it."§ In Poland alone there were 3,000,000 starving Jews, and Mr. Hoover tells us, "1,000,000 under-nourished children." Nor are these numbers greatly reduced in this present year. All the orphanages are overcrowded, and the children's eyesight is suffering for want of food.

And what shall we say of Russia? If conditions are appalling in Vienna, what are they likely to be in Petrograd and Moscow?

Everywhere we turn in these records we find the same statement: "No medicines. No disinfectants."

In Vienna, hospitals that were once the pride of the great capital, fitted with every appliance of medical and surgical science, by 1919, lacked everything, from anæsthetics down to the most obvious requirements of decency.‖ In the maternity hospital at Buda-Pesth, where 16,000 confine-

* *Neue Freie Presse*, May 31st, 1919 (Parliamentary Debates in Vienna, Dr. Schacherl's report).

† Dr. Alice Masaryk, President of the Czech Red Cross, in the *Morning Post*, May 23rd, 1919.

‡ *Morning Post*, June 8th, 1919.

§ Paris Correspondent, *Manchester Guardian*, May 21st, 1919.

‖ Bandages "almost entirely lacking; there is no more cottonwool . . . no more rubber articles, no more surgical glasses, stethoscopes, drainage-tubes, teats for feeding-bottles." Report of Dr. Frederick Ferriers, Vice-President of the International Mission in Austria.

ments take place annually, there are no more sheets. The new-born children are rolled naked into old rags. At the end of eight or ten days the mothers are sent away, often fated to die of hunger and cold. Things are worse still in the Military Reserve Hospital. The sufferers lie rolled up in summer coverings, on straw mattresses. If they have strength enough they are obliged to get up, day or night, in order not to die of cold, and to walk up and down to get warm. . . The disinfectant apparatus cannot be worked for lack of coal. For a long time there has been no body linen at all. . . . In the Rokuccentralspital for internal and surgical cases it is impossible to get boiling water; but it is in the Garnisonspital, 'that waiting-room of hell'—as one of the doctors of the establishment called it—that "distress attains its maximum of horror," where, "covered and bitten by the most filthy kind of body-vermin, madmen and paralytics lie on filthy beds, in icy cold wards, without water, without fire."* Result—exanthematic typhus.

In one typical case the food, "more than reduced," consisted of a very thin soup of pumpkin with 200 grammes of milk, the maximum for the whole hospital of 150 beds being 90 litres a day.

Everywhere even elementary cleanliness was impossible. If you have ever nursed a case of spinal paralysis where the clean linen is even beginning to run short, if you have ever gone into the houses of the very poor in the season of infantile disorders, and seen the piteous makeshifts of the mothers, you will have some faint, far-off idea of the horror of these wards, where imbeciles and paralytics lie for weeks on the same filthy rags, with no possibility of a change to rags less filthy, no prospect but accumulating filth; where the same soaked mattress serves for a succession of births. There is hardly one abomination of the war that can compare with the hospitals of Vienna and Prague and Buda-Pesth, not even the prison-camp at Wittenberg or that Mesopotamian hospital ship, grotesque and infamous.

This was the state of things in 1919, and it has not improved since. And if these are the "best hospitals," what must the worst be?

* Report of the Delegates of the International Society's Commission in the East of Europe.

By wounds and mutilations war may achieve a sharper crescendo of individual agony, but if you would realise the slow, long-drawn agony of a race you must visit the children's hospitals of German Austria and Hungary.

But let us have no illusions on this subject. By the blockade we stood to win the war or lose it. The countries involved were not mainly sea-coast countries. They were the great granaries of Central and Eastern Europe. They had, therefore, unique natural resources, even allowing for a state of war. There is no arguing with those humanitarian enthusiasts who would have had the Allies raise the blockade when military necessity was most pressing, who believed that, say, Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald were better judges of a military necessity than Admiral Beatty or Marshal Foch. If nobody was justified then in making the Allies' hard task harder, nothing is to be gained now by charging them with hypocrisy and inviting them to contemplate the fruits of victory. The scale of the European tragedy is too big for any chorus of sentimental ironies and pities.

Let us face the facts. It is admitted in Berlin that military necessity compelled Germany and Austria to hide their sufferings. If we had known a year ago all that we know now the same military necessity would no less have compelled us to shut our eyes and harden our hearts. Before November of 1918 there was no moment of the war when we should not have betrayed our armies if we had yielded to our natural instincts of compassion. We were forced to the appalling alternative: either that betrayal of our own sons and brothers, or the dooming of those innocents to three hells of filth, of cold, of hunger.

Mercifully we are no longer under military necessity. We can open our eyes and ears again; we can listen to the heart of our common humanity without fear of paying for our humanitarianism with defeat. There is no military danger from those populations of half-dead women and children. Those tortured skeleton forms, those grey pest-faces can hardly rise up and stab us except with pity. The misery of Europe is so vast and overwhelming that beside it any discussion as to original causes becomes academic. By the sheer illusion of its immensity in space

it sets the war itself so far back in time that you might as well argue about what caused the extinction of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

As a matter of fact, it is precisely this kind of argument that the supporters of the international relief commissions have had to face. It can be said, with justice, that Germany, who made the mess, should clean it up herself, and that our charity has more than enough to do at home.

But things are not quite so simple as all that. In the first place we cannot throw off all obligation even when we have securely fixed the blame on Germany. If the original cause of our blockade was Germany's will to conquer, at least one of the immediate causes of Europe's desolation was our blockade. There can be no doubt, therefore, of our responsibility towards the victims of Pan-Germanism. We have incurred it by right of conquest and by *noblesse oblige*. If we hadn't, our indifference, our refusal to help to the fullest extent of our power, would still constitute a crime against our common humanity. And there is no sin against *That* which does not ultimately recoil against the sinner. If we did not hasten to help for the sake of humanity, for the love of helping, and for our own credit's sake, *we should be compelled by sheer social and economic prudence.*

There is no military danger *as yet* from the diseased and attenuated peoples of Middle and Eastern Europe; but there is the danger, the very certain and awful danger, of infection. No sanitary cordon that you can draw round the devastated areas will be tight enough to keep Western Europe safe from cholera, malaria, tuberculosis and typhus when once communications are opened up again. Tuberculosis? Tuberculosis in every possible form, from phthisis to lupus, is already fastening on Western Europe. Typhus? In Berlin there were, in 1919, 10,000 houses infected with lice. Typhus has been endemic in Berlin since the war, and unless something is done at once it will become epidemic. And epidemics have no respect for frontiers.

There is the danger of anarchy. We cannot expect that the present apathy of exhaustion will last for ever. There will be anarchy, bloody anarchy, overpowering and implacable, if once the torpid intelligence of these victims

is roused to consciousness of their desolation too late. This is likely to happen in the moment when we have fed them a little but not enough. The obvious remedy, then, is to feed them enough and very quickly. Every week that we delay increases our peril; for we cannot be absolutely certain that anarchy will be so obliging as to confine itself to Middle Europe and the Near East. It also has no regard for frontiers.

There is, of course, the alternative of not feeding them at all. Were we to adopt it, we should bring on our heads at once the catastrophe that already threatens us—the commercial and industrial collapse of half Europe.

Catastrophe—not merely the grave hampering of our own industries for want of the essential stuffs that the famine areas once supplied.

That is what it comes to. Again, let us be under no illusions, above all, under no hypocritical illusions. It is not entirely a question of humanitarianism, of the charity that never stays at home. It is a question of economic self-preservation. Without the blockade we should not have won the war in 1918. *Without the work of the Relief Commissions we shall not win the Peace.* Behind the splendid and pure charity of the relief workers is the slowly awakening common sense of the British Government. If the British Government is paying into the funds of the Relief Committees a pound for every pound they spend, it is not because that Government is a purely humanitarian institution. It is because there are in it a few clear-sighted statesmen and a few sound business men who know what they are about.

Now I do not imagine that even our " blood-thirsty intellectuals " seriously desire to contemplate the industrial and commercial extinction of Germany. But there are some of us who do not desire to see her future predominance carried to excess in Middle Europe and the Near East. Through the absorption of German Austria, even defeated, she would remain, by numbers and geographical position, the strongest of the European Powers. It must not be supposed for a moment that because Germany has been beaten in this five years' war she is not powerful still. Short of annihilation you cannot change or extinguish the genius of a nation by defeat. Allow her time

to recover in—and that time will be allowed her—and Germany, with her adaptability, with her immense capacity for recuperation, with her immense untouched resources, her parsimony, her cold passion of industry, and her amazing racial fertility, will have no difficulty in absorbing the impoverished and exhausted peoples round her. So widespread is their destitution, so profound their collapse, that they would have no alternative but either extinction or absorption.

There is, therefore, the danger of a war more terrible than any we have yet seen. Nobody with the smallest intellectual prudence would assert that such a war is impossible or even very improbable.

Only the visionary lovers of humanity may claim to see farther than our intellectual prudence. Their passion survives every shock of agonising experience. They will tell you that, if there is any hope of the world's peace, it is with us here, in the drawing together of all peoples and nations and languages, of conquerors and conquered, in one regenerating work of charity.

It is to such a task that the Allied and neutral nations are called to-day.

Money is needed first and most urgently; then supplies; then volunteers for work in the famine areas: nurses, cooks, interpreters, secretaries, visiting reporters, organisers and distributors of relief. Those who cannot give either money or service should help in making the work of others known.

All subscriptions, offers of volunteers, and requests for information should be sent to The Secretary, "Save the Children Fund"* (Room 48), 26, Golden Square, Regent Street, London, W.1.

* Registered under the War Charities Act, 1916.

The Barrie Method and a Melodrama

By John Pollock

When the man whom Maeterlinck called the grandfather of the Blue Bird gives us a new work, inkpots automatically pour forth a pæan of praise. It is a fault of almost all daily criticism not of the highest order, but particularly of English criticism as practised by its secondary exponents, that those authors and performers who have attained a certain standing with the managers are virtually immune from it: the question becomes, not how to appraise the work, but how to express the admiration that the orthodox are bound to feel. Mr. Bernard Shaw put the matter concisely in the mouth of one of his critics in *Fanny's First Play*: "Tell me who the play is by, and I will tell you what I think of it." Sir James Barrie has long since reached this enviable height. Nevertheless, he has not given way to the temptation of following Ilam Carve's recipe for popularity and "painting life-sized policemen all his life." This restraint disturbs the otiosity of the orthodox. He ought, they feel, to do exactly the same as before, but he doesn't; and yet such is his eminence that they know it must be orthodox to praise everything he does. Therefore they take refuge in saying that he is whimsical and "Barrie-ish," and that the actors do not understand what he is at, and the wiseacres among orthodox playgoers lament that he treats subjects from too personal a point of view.

I propose to take for my text a play that is not his latest nor his most important, but one that is a peculiarly good example of Sir James Barrie's mature style. *The Truth about the Russian Dancers* is a wholly delightful piece of wit written by a master of the stage who is also a poet in feeling. Its fantasy, so far from being inappropriate or weird, is in a direct line with the spirit of the great English

romanticists from Keats to George Meredith. All that makes it seem strange is that, instead of being on an imaginative, it is on a topical subject, a procedure staggering to the British brain, always stubborn in face of novelty. Now if Sir James Barrie chose to lavish his fancy and elegance on an ephemeral subject, it was his right, and perhaps an added ground for gratitude; for indeed, looked at closely, the subject is seen not to be of such fleeting interest as the first blush would suggest. The influence of the combination of arts which we know as the Russian ballet, due in various degrees to Isadora Duncan, Diaghilev, Nijinsky, and Bakst, has probably had a much further-reaching influence on our life than we ordinarily suppose. The direct effect on music and the theatre, in which latter we owe to it the whole race of *Kismets*, *Afgars*, and *Chu Chin Chows*, is obvious; but it has touched decoration, dress, and deportment also, and is comparable to that of the William Morris movement of the eighteen-eighties and nineties. Instead of Greenery-Yallery we have bare backs and dazzle dresses; and the podgiest Putney ankles delight to display themselves and the calves from which they are barely distinguishable. The part played by the Russian ballet warrants its being made the object of attention grave and gay as much as Whistlerism or the Pre-Raphaelites.

In effect Sir James Barrie has done to the Russian dancers what an ingenious Bohemian glassworker did to flowers. The Czech crystallised orchid and lily, and bound their souls by his genius to speak for ever through the glass: Sir James Barrie chains the essence of the ballet—with what dainty chains, lighter than air—and inside an hour analyses, ecstasises, philosophises its art, so that from being a mere pleasure it rises in the sight of all to be not only an interpretation of life, but life itself. If the piece fell short of complete success, this was due to the author's collaborators, a thing that rarely happens to so master a craftsman, but may in a case, as here, where his medium is new to him. He was let down by Mr. Arnold Bax and—*mirabile dictu*—by Madame Karsavina. The former's music, though agreeable and ingenious, is feeble when compared, as is inevitable, with that which forms the basis of the Russian dancer's art: the shades of Schubert, Chopin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rubinstein, Glazounov, and Debussy rose in competition,

and would not be denied. And, strange to say, in an allegory that chants the genius of the maestro and places his figure on its true pedestal, it would appear that his assistance was neglected. Executant of rare talent and spirit of delicacy as Mme. Karsavina is, she cannot afford to dispense with the guiding intelligence of the ballet-master. "Choreography by Mme. Karsavina" was, frankly, a failure. Mme. Karsavina's masterly and feeling art as far as concerned herself was one long entrancing *entrechat*, an *ébattement* of beatitude: she indeed bore out Lady Vere's words: "Dick says that Russian dancers speak with their toes." But this was not enough. From the wedding onwards the piece clamoured for the dance, and the dances, as opposed to Mme. Karsavina's own delicious terpsichorean acting, were insignificant, cramped, and confused. They did no more than illustrate the unsaltatory quality of the music, which plainly was incapable of inspiring dances worthy of the theme. This was especially felt when the pure comedy of an opening instinct with the prettiest yet ironical grace led, through its macabre development, to what should have been a triumphant ecstasis; the opportunity was not seized, and the finale became as nearly boring as a union between Barrie and Karsavina could be.

The Truth about the Russian Dancers, besides its intrinsic value, has the further merit of enabling us to study its author's method in a precise and convenient form. Writing for the stage has in various hands approached perfection; not to mention the greatest, let us say with Beaumarchais in *Le Mariage de Figaro*, with Ibsen in *Ghosts*, with Wilde in *Salome*. I venture to assert that Sir James Barrie is in a fair way to touch this point of technical excellence. This is not a question of the theme or the emotion expressed, but of the execution of the work once conceived. There is in Sir James Barrie's writing a brevity hardly surpassed by any other author; his effects are made with an ease that is in itself a delight, and he has pushed the pursuit of *le mot juste* to a limit that sometimes takes the spectator's breath away. On the stage these—exactitude of expression and absence of effort—if not one and the same thing, are at least inseparable from each other. As an instance let us take the entrance of the clergyman. He comes in smoking his pipe, obviously bent on a friendly

call after a walk. "I thought one would come," cries Lord Vere, who is already in a wedding garment amid ringing bells. What more is needed, given the atmosphere of the play? It is complete. The clergyman knows naught of Karissima or of weddings. Lady Vere whispers to him words that we do not hear. "Ah," he says, "I understand—seen them in London." That is all, and again it is complete. That such swimming over difficulties proceeds with perfect naturalness from the atmosphere of this particular play, and could not be used in another is true, and is not an objection to my proposition, but, on the contrary, supports it, for to develop the subject naturally from the premise selected, so that no one can say, "Ah, but this could not be," is the highest point of this part of the dramatist's art.

This is equally true, be the premise selected in the domain of fantasy, comedy, drama, or of melodrama, a form of drama in which motives, and thus events, spring from causes insufficient to produce them in real life, but within those limits governed by laws of its own being. In each domain the method of art, the Barrie method, must be applied if sound results are to be obtained. These considerations are enforced by a recent melodramatic production in London, *The Man Who Came Back*, at the Oxford Theatre. This is an American play with a run of five years to its credit in the United States, but none the less for lack of the true method unsound and sickly. We start here from the premise that a rich, vain, irascible father would cure his son of weakness and spendthrift habits by casting him out on the world, and the son in revenge swears to overwhelm his father with shame. From that point till the end there is no development; therefore is no growth of interest. What ensues produces the effect of merely marking time, and the more violent the means employed, by so much the more violently do the feet seem to stamp upon the ground at precisely the same spot. Miss Mary Nash, a young visitor to these shores, who created a favourable impression by her freshness and courage in attacking the crude climaxes of the play, had indeed one opportunity for fine acting. In Act II. the cabaret singer whom she played has sunk to the depths and become an *habituée* of "the lowest opium-den in

China," confident that in time the millionaire's son will drift there, too, and rejoin her. He comes, and she, to test him, feigns that she does not recognise him, and is not herself. An interesting moment of *double jeu*, but from Miss Nash's acting the audience had no chance of detecting the undercurrent, and was left to suppose the girl so drug-sodden that her love, memory, and very individuality had been stolen away by the pipe, until she actually told us in words that the emptiness of her brain was make-believe. As for the boy, Mr. George Relph plăyed him from start to finish with the self-assurance of a commonplace "hero," with whom all must go well. In him was no touch of the weakling or slave to self-indulgence. What a study Mr. Vincent Clive, for instance, or Mr. William Armstrong might have made of the dissipated wretch, but then the play would have been knocked to smithereens. It is only saved by its complete absence of pretence to reality, which allows of a succession of violent appeals to the nerves. A girl takes to drugs in order to meet her lover (prophetically sure that he will do the same), and is half-strangled by him "to save her from herself," and forthwith offers him her virginity, and then he lashes her with a stockwhip to scare her from a relapse (though, of course, she was only pretending); and in Act 5, after all this, his emotions are on exactly the same plane as they were in Act 1, and hers as in Act 2, when we first met her. It is *Captains Courageous* with the psychology left out, retold, not according to the gospel of the cinema, which, except in farce, insists on development, but rather on the principle of the roundabout, on which you seem to progress, but ever return to the same place. Such is not the method of real melodrama, like *The Whip* or *Les Deux Gosses*, or, in a more refined atmosphere, of *The New Sin*. These carried you along; they could do so, for they went somewhere. But *The Man Who Came Back* goes nowhere, and therefore leaves you where it found you. Its object is not to stimulate the emotions, but merely to astonish and deaden the nerves by thumping them. It is, in fact, not melodrama, but jazz drama.

The moral of which is that, if they aspire to better than jazz, melodramatists, like other dramatists, should study *The Truth about the Russian Dancers*, and profit by it.

Thumbs Up

By Senex

When the Roman public, who went to the gladiatorial "shows" in much the same way that to-day we go to the races, turned their thumbs up, a life was spared; the gladiator was pardoned; he left the arena ready for another meal. But the Roman public was fickle, and as often as not they turned their thumbs down, in which case the defeated retiarius or combatant received the *coup de grâce*, to the delight of the Roman blood-lust. One can see exactly the same spirit, and experience almost the same thrill, in the Spanish bull-ring. If a bull does not show fight, the cry goes up—*Fuego*, or fire; which means that explosive darts (Banderillas) are stuck into the wretched beast, frequently blowing out an eye, and the roars of joy with which the tortures of the bull are greeted testify to the slight difference in civilisation between the Roman and the Spanish. A great fighting bull is sometimes spared—to fight again another day. The test is the number of horses the creature lays out. The bull-ring is certainly the most gorgeous thrill left to modern civilisation, once the cruelty can be overcome, once man can reconcile himself to the objective pleasure of seeing the fiercest animal in the world out-witted and beaten by the brain of the biped.

Its effect upon the people is notorious. A class of petted bull-fighters arises, who are the darlings of the mob and, in Spain, take the place of the Anglo-Saxon financier. In time, the people become *observers;* critics of the battle; delighters in blood; indifferent to all forms of animal suffering. A man can belabour his horse to death, nobody cares. The animal is *el bruto*, that is, it has no "soul." Thus the Spanish regard animals as mere flesh and blood, the suffering of which they view with complete indifference, and its effects are visible all over the country, so far as all beasts without "souls" are concerned.

Its effects are equally notorious upon man. Love of

cruelty inevitably breeds cruelty, which is perhaps man's worst sin. Instead of hardening a nation, it weakens it. Out of the bull-ring, no martial response has arisen. Rather the contrary. The sloth of Spain is not climatic, it is psychological, and unquestionably it derives largely from the bull-fight, the great Sunday spectacle of the land, the weekly seventh-day indulgence after Mass.

The Roman gladiatorial shows likewise demoralised the people. They, too, became observers, critics, blood-lovers in the theatre rather than on the battle-field. In time these shows became exhibitions of sensuality. They were the national theatre. Learned historians revel in Latin quotations of the feats performed by the "stars" of the day, notably those of the Empress Theodora. Then the Christians came, and the arena was turned into the propagandist cockpit of the age. The Christians were the Bolshevists of their period. Lions devoured them. Bears mauled them. They were slain and burnt amid the plaudits of the Roman people, for they, too, had no "souls" in the eyes of Rome, which at that time was pagan.

Thumbs down destroyed Rome. The process of spectacular blood-spilling brutalised the great fighting sense of Romans, who from fighters deteriorated into spectators. Rome crashed before a hardier and lower race. To-day, no man can look upon the Coliseum in the engraving of Piranesi without instinctively feeling that had they conducted those shows with the spirit of "thumbs up," Rome would have survived the Goths.

With the doctrine of "thumbs down," or war to the vanquished, the Germans, imitators of old imperial Rome, went to war in 1914. Their "frightfulness" and gospel of terrorism were derived from Rome. Once more the gospel of force was to conquer a world, and the Kaiser was to return to Berlin in a grand triumphal march as the modern Cæsar of the universe. The Germans forgot everything except the world, which, in fear and rage, rose up to repel the intruder. Again, Force lies prostrate. Idea has triumphed. Man has shown himself to be a man. The Coliseum of Berlin has passed to Fleet Street, and with a roar of loud delight in revenge, London and Paris turn their thumbs down.

"Off with his head!" "Bleed them white," "Make them

LAURA KNIGHT

pay every farthing," and so on, just as Poppæa might have screamed at the sight of some poor Christian boy in the arena, or to-day Señor Don Pasquale will shout at a bull which funks the nag and lance of the Picador. *Fuego!* The world celebrates its victory with the cry of the bull-ring. Get out the squibs! "Plank them in the German's eye." Hurrah! "Burn him!" and as the smell of the scorched flesh rises and permeates the air, a public enjoys its holiday.

Is it to be "thumbs down"? Is the world to celebrate its victory of idea with a necropolis of force? Is civilisation triumphant to name its own sentence even before the dead are all buried? That is the problem before Europe. The war will either end in a London bull-ring or a definite manifestation of progress. Of a certainty, if the cry is "thumbs down," we and all who take part in it will have signed our decline and fall.

All history proves this. And, indeed, it must be so, for out of all war there springs an idea which again determines the nature and idea of the next war. As things stand to-day under a Peace which differs in no aspect, social or cultural, from any Peace inflicted by Rome or the Christian kings, the idea is revenge. Is fear. Is greed. Is force. Attila has been struck down, long live Attila! That is all. The conquering idea thus passes to the conquered. Theirs will be the future, for theirs is the hope. They will be the creators, for they will have the incentive, the will, the *virtus*. We, the victors, will become the revellers, the spectators, the critics, the passives, the debauchers in a debauching ceremonial.

For life, art, idea, creation come out of tears, rarely out of intoxication, never out of a surfeit. If now we are to be Europe's new Rome, imitation Napoleon, the alternative Hohenzollern, the idea of man, of humanity, of life, of redress will reside with the despoiled and the humiliated, with the Peoples whose lot is tears. We shall be showmen, spectators, and inevitably as such become wanton, careless, vainglorious, destitute of the one thing that matters to a man or nation—the soul.

A creed of "thumbs down" cannot be associated with the creative sense. All summits are illusions, not ends; they point but to the way down. There are no finalities, no

resting-places, no perpetuities. A nation which thinks a war has settled anything is like a man who imagines he is freed from all mortal pain because he has had a bad tooth extracted. It is our specific danger. All that has happened so far since 1914 is a transvaluation of force—nothing more. The idea of the war is still Europe's perplexity. The idea of the peace has not yet even been formulated. So far, we have run the gladiatorial show of victory. We have yelled and enjoyed the echo. We have earthed the dragon. Now the question of defeated Europe is life or death? Thumbs up or thumbs down? In other words, shall we reconstruct or all prepare for the next world-struggle?

At present, that is the one positive issue apparent. The Franco-German historical feud will not be ended or mended because France for the nonce has been put "on top" by a world which feared the efficiency of the enemy, and unless we reach some real basis of reconciliation, the problem of Europe will remain—war, the balance of power as between France and Germany.

Shortly now we must choose. If it is to be "thumbs up," we may be able to reach a new definition of statesmanship. But if it is to be "thumbs down," we shall have lost the war, and sown the seeds of the next "war of liberation."

For we cannot destroy, we can only deflect, deter, derange in a scheme of life, the essence of which is movement. Our ranges henceforth will be the complacency of the hill-top, the glorious view, the panorama, the pleasant luncheon-basket astride the peaked cap. We shall not see what is going on below; in the valleys of toil, in the plains of sorrow, in the rushing streams of desire. If our idea is the rejection of idea, our gilt-edged securities will depreciate; our civilisation will become fly-blown, our name anathema. In all war the question is life, not death; what is the live-issue? We do not know. Only too many do not seem to care. If that becomes our outlook, not only shall we have gained nothing, we shall have lost everything, for we shall have lost our youth. Youth will have passed to defeated Europe; age will overtake victorious Europe, the palsy of self-satisfaction. Is that to be our lot? We have to think not in Europe but imperially, we who are one only so long as we can agree to disagree, can connect by virtue of our

dissociation. Any other view must be short-sighted. And what is ours is, above all, idea. It was that that drew the world to our side, the idea that our civilisation was the better worth preserving. At stake to-day is the continuity of that idea. The test will be our dispensation of victory, our application of the idea that created us one and whole, our gift of common-sense.

Anglo-Saxon civilisation will undoubtedly depend not upon our physical oneness in war, but upon our component justification in peace. We shall connect or diverge according to our unit of idea, the mirror of which will be Europe: her fate, progress and measure of opportunity. With thumbs down we shall defer the solution to our children, who may decline the task. Only with hope can we recreate. Only by refusing the bull-ring shall we leaven up. Only through our own testimony shall we induce the testimony of others, which is what we fought for, what, every man of us, we should now fight to assert.

The beaten gladiator lies in the ring. If we turn our thumbs down, we may go home to a good dinner, but our children will have assuredly to fight for it, to fight, under the law of balance, for a lost cause.

"His People"

By Frances Rivers

The heart of the Reverend Ambrose Fayre smote him as he watched the rapid filling up of the pantechnicon vans with the contents of the Vicarage.

Three-and-twenty years since he had walked up the pulpit stairs of Watling Church to preach his first sermon to his flock. Since then he had talked from the pulpit rather than preached to his people. He had talked of the beauty of temperance, disinterestedness, and love. He had instanced the worth of godliness, valour, and self-control, and by him they had been made conversant with the history of the Bible, of man, and of the Church.

Being in sympathy with a sixteenth century divine who said "I will tell you a merry tale" that his people might lift up their heads and hearken as he tells of heaven, the Reverend Ambrose sought similarly to interest his congregation and keep it from dropping into sleep.

The living of Watling was worth just sixty pounds a year. Fortunately, Ambrose Fayre had an additional income which allowed of his existing in reasonable comfort and indulging in the luxury of charity.

For twenty-three years he had had the friendship of his people. Then one night dissension had appeared in the parish. It had been brought apparently on a trellis. By the putting up of this trellis Mrs. Potter had obscured a view which Miss Priscilla Blaze had long enjoyed. Simultaneously there had arisen friction between the Misses Geary over the choice of a new altar-cloth, and a tussle of wills had occurred between Lady Moore and Mrs. Jones for the privilege of cleaning the brasses in the church. Each of these grievances revealed fretfulness, but the trellis it was which was responsible for the Vicar's decision to leave.

"Odd," thought he, eyeing the offending cause, "that an obstruction should become a way."

These petty dissensions happening to synchronise with the visit of his Bishop—the family and condition of the

Reverend Ambrose permitted of his being on terms of friendship with his ecclesiastical superior—Ambrose talked over with him the matter of change.

"Oh, no!" he was not dissatisfied. He had no thought to chase that "shadow's shadow ambition." He had no desire even to wear gaiters; but change would possibly be advantageous to the parish as well as to himself. The people were, likely enough, weary of him and—and the stairs needed to be re-carpeted.

The Bishop smiled and threw out the information that the living of Newhouse had just become vacant. In fact, the object of his coming to Watling had been to offer it to Ambrose. He could take it up at once. Six hundred a year isn't likely to go long a-begging, and, well! we must try to induce somebody to take this.

Thus, casually, or so it seemed, had decision been come to; or, as Ambrose expressed it, "On such small hinges do weighty matters turn."

The foolish pain of regret seized him before the Bishop left the Vicarage, but with the great man's "What's the harm in change?" courage to retract his decision had failed.

He left the house now and s.untered into the garden. It was planned on no princely scale, but, large or small, the Vicar was in agreement with Bacon that a garden is the purest of human pleasures and yields the greatest refreshment to the spirit of man. This special garden was a place of great beauty, and to-day looked decked as though for a wedding. The flowers sacred to Aphrodite and the flowers sacred to the Madonna were in full perfection. They seemed to have released their scent to make of the hour a thurible. Ambrose Fayre thought of the many aspects under which he had seen the lawns with their garrison of flowers—in the long shadows of morning, the colourless dither of noon, the mystery and poetry of the evening—during those six perfect months which are strung upon the cord termed summer. He thought how from the very beginning of the pageant of flowers there is no time allowed in which to grieve over the passing of one flower before being faced by another. How no sooner do the snowdrops die than they are replaced by crocuses; how crocuses in their turn yield to jonquils, and how the vision splendid is accomplished with the advent of the lily and the rose.

And the promise of the garden's bloom would change into fulfilment for an alien to enjoy; or, worse still, he saw the garden in his mind's eye, masked in the desolation from which he had been its rescuer; for only that morning the post had brought him the news that no Incumbent had been found to fill the living's void. From the garden he wandered into the churchyard. Here in deep rest he had laid many humble friends. He must leave the dead as he must leave the living; the young, whose imaginations he had helped to feed; the old, whose loneliness he had never failed to cheer.

His heart was wrung with pity for himself as he thought how he had been the recipient of gifts of appreciation from the rich, which had been easy to accept, and gifts of love from the poor, which he had been unwilling to refuse. He thought, too, of how the barbed tongues of Miss Priscilla Blaze and the Misses Geary had been softened, and how grief at his going had taught "love to fall like music" from the mouths of both Lady Moore and Mrs. Jones. They had, he decided, but been sufferers from attacks of spleen. What a want of knowledge of human nature he had been betrayed into! How he had misjudged his people.

"There ought," said he, "to be an affection gauge like a rain gauge; then we should know exactly in what esteem we are held by our friends."

What an act of madness it had been which had made him suppose that he had lost his people's love. "Nature," said he, quoting Sterne, "has set up certain boundaries and fences to circumscribe the discontent of man." Why should he, Ambrose, seek other boundaries to his discontent than those of his beloved parish? Why should he seek to make of himself a peregrine martyr, since neither infirmity of body nor inevitable necessity drove him forth?

The deuce of it was that the vans were filled. "Well," he decided, "they must be emptied." Having thus settled matters with himself, his next step was to settle it with the van men. The foreman proving to have a sense of humour, this was soon done.

Light-heartedly, Ambrose Fayre walked across the village green to the Post Office. As he went he sought to concoct a telegram which should meet the occasion, and touch the ecclesiastical heart.

"Mary Rose"—in Europe

By Austin Harrison

A WORLD, bemused and benumbed, was growing decidedly weary of building houses and company flotations on whisky and sodas minus the whisky when a fresh war broke out, which, recognised at once to possess the unerring Churchillian touch, was billed to "knock out" the Russian corrector of capitalist statistics for good and all. This summer the "Last Post" was to have sounded over the corpse of "Comrade" Lenin. Stricken with typhus, with half a dozen different currencies floating on a mark quoted at 750 odd to the sovereign, Poland, armed with American war material supplied on credit by France, at last found the justification for her resurrection, and, with God's blessing, would shatter Russia, restore the old Polish Empire of 200 years ago, and incidentally save Catholic Europe, the capitalist Jew, and Anglo-American credit. Expectation ran high. Floating on the notorious Russian anti-Jewish protocols which Miliukov exposed years ago in the celebrated ritual trial of the Jew accused of drinking a Christian's blood, *The Times* duly frightened us; and then Pilsudski, conveniently described as a Socialist to square British Labour, gave the order: "One, two, three—Go!" Off went the Poles to the rat-a-plan of Franco-Polish hegemony, quite like Germany in 1914, and of course they "broke through" and won the war in the first three weeks. Europe was made safe for war. The League of Nations had a tea-party. Even the rouble managed to get quoted on the American Exchange—at a penny.

"Mary Rose" had come back on the Protocols, and Mr. Churchill had really won a war this time. Paris was jubilant. Now the Ukraine would break away from Northern Russia; now we could attend to the Arabs disputing our hegemony—"the rogues!"—at our leisure; now Russia would be "cleaned up." "Mary Rose!"—one

could hear the fairies of war profits calling to her in every capital of Europe. Poland was the Mary Rose of the post-war war . . . . .

To-day we go back to Europe "as it is"—to the bleak, empty, haunted house, as depicted in Sir James Barrie's play. Lowered are the standards of Pilsudski and his legions. Prostrate is Poland's imperial "glory." The line is way back on the old, old frontier. It is Trotski's drums that are rolling. It is the tramp of the Russias reunited, renationalised, re-patriotised, that we hear marching towards Warsaw, like the steam-roller of our 1914 hallucinations, and in the death-rattle Russia is reclaimed. The gay, young, roseate Poland that was, that should have been, is a doomed creation. The wind is blowing through her imperial halls, and the grandfather clock has stopped. The old ghosts are about again, clanking their Napoleonic chains. "Mary Rose!" Alas! the glad young warrior that skipped off to war returns a torso. History repeats itself. This astonishing fact emerges in the Europe "that is," the *fourth partition of Poland has begun.*

The fact dominated Spa, where, instead of a settlement, all that anxious politicians dared attempt was a disciplinary conversation adapted for newspaper reproduction. With that fascinating adroitness that never forsakes our Prime Minister, he suddenly remembers the League of Nations. "The tap! Where is the tap?" O, ah! good old Wilson! "*No annexations and no indemnities*," he postulates, thereby acquiescing in the famous formula laid down by Bolshevism at Brest-Litovsk; or, "Gad, sir. Take it from me. Ahem! We—fight." The League of Nations wakes up with a start. "Eh, what?" "Oh, it's quite all right," returns our Protean Premier. "Let us all have another little conference." At this juncture "soft incidental music" is required. Will the Bolshies refrain? Shall we fight, if they don't? Ah, but really fight? And that, as we stroll into the bar wondering whether we can afford a drink, and still pay the children's holiday railway fares, is the world question before Britain and Europe: "What did you do in the great Polish war, daddy?" History has yet to record whether Great Britain turned C.O.

or not. I will not attempt a prophecy out of due respect for "section three" of our new "Basilian" administration.

But act four of the world's play is already a foregone conclusion, and it is that Mary Rose or Greater Poland has once more joined the fairies. Nothing succeeds like success, in love and war, and the rule is golden, even in an era of paper values. The Ukraine will not now dream of "cutting out." The little Peoples, capitalised on lumber concessions on the shores of the Baltic, will not now seek affiliation with the mad currency of Polish marks, and will appreciate back into the Russias. And much more to boot. "White" Russia is re-born. The fiercest Cossack, Tartar, or Tsarist "cuts-off" of Thackerayan nomenclature tosses up his cap at this Russian victory over usurping Poland, and in the act Russia is militarily reunited. Almost politically so. Economics are forgotten. The White Russian salutes the martial Trotski. "We are Russian," those men cry. If Lenin has an eye for statesmanship, now is his time to save his country. "'Tis an ill wind," etc. Poland's insanity has saved Europe from militarism. With a contrite heart, her leaders must now journey to Siberia, or wherever the next place for wasting the People's money may be situated, to accept the logic of failure—to be carved up, according to the formula of Paris; to go back to her proper boundaries, and ponder upon the uncertainties of the "greatest of all games."

Yet it will be her salvation, as it is ours. Now we can begin to talk with Russia's emissaries, unless the Finns perchance can be screwed up to risk a Churchillian escapade, or Japan plumps wholesale for Siberia. But these are dubious complexes. It looks, this time, like stalemate. A decision there will be, and the issue must deprive Poland of her war programme, and in reality must smash that "sanitary cordon." What Poland really needs is a sanitary commission. It is anti-lousing establishments that we ought to have sent her, not tanks. A great hospital campaign is required, if Poland is to be restored to health, and the first step is peace. It will come. Thus the Polish war has brought peace nearer; will enable us to have a disciplinary conversation with the Russians and remove

another error. The Europe of martial Poland will not now exist. That horse broke her back at the first hurdle. The concoction of Wilson *versus* the rest at Paris is already fly-blown. To-day, if the Poles have any sense left, they will now make war on the lice destroying their own sad countrymen.

"There is a judgment"—that is the lesson, and even the League of Nations may now have a chance. For if, to save Poland, the League is invoked, a definite beginning will have been made, which, even the "same" men, as Mr. Balfour described them, will find hard to dislodge, however much they may try to discriminate between nations which may make wars and peaces and nations which may only have wars and peaces thrust upon them. Something positive may happen if Poles and Russians agree to accept League of Nations' law—still more so, if that finding is recognised as equitable and, in the deliration of that supreme hour, other victimised nations invoke the mechanism of redress duly registered in the Covenant. The Poles then need not despair. Rather the contrary, for they can now be truly instrumental. If they demand a League settlement, as against a "hand-out" by the politicians of the "Supreme Council," they assuredly can get it, and the fact would establish a precedent of considerable moment. No doubt, much will depend upon the "advice" accorded to them by the influences that will war, but the Poles will indeed be past redemption if, relying upon the word of their would-be controllers and the cartographers of a vanishing map, they seek a Prussian peace on the field of Longchamps on the chance of "finding the lady," on that racecourse. A definite opportunity opens to create a definite European Council, thus putting an end to the ignoble subterfuges of Europe's travelling circus. Poland can still save Europe. In any case, she can save herself —which is already a very important step in that direction.

For even if we merely have a Conference at Trouville or Geneva and another deal by the assessors, this at least must happen. Eastern Europe is "liberated" afresh. The nightmare of Poland, "the strong" (with a Navy) will be removed, the law of balance returns. Poland will

henceforth have to seek an economic equation instead of a militarist dictation. The kindest thing we can do is to send her a couple of good bankers.

With a Poland pitiful, Russia becomes once more a national problem, to ignore which would lead to complete and rapid cataclysm. It is a queer reflection, yet none the less significant, that Poland and Ireland are the two foci of European peace and happiness, for what Poland is to Eastern Europe, Ireland is to the West. Were Poland to appeal to the League of Nations, why should not Ireland? Indeed, why does Ireland not so appeal? Were she to do this, at once a *détente* would come over our entire imperial difficulties, threatening monthly to assume more and more insoluble dimensions as they near the breaking-point fixed between the delirium of economics and politics. The "potty" (to use a good schoolboy's word) Council, unable even to hide their respective differences in the face of their late enemy, cannot settle these problems which to-day have become principles of civilisation, no longer the hack dissensions of mere Parties. Between war and revolution there is the frail structure of the League, which Poland can start into being. And this is really Poland's only chance, wedged in between the two strongest Peoples in Europe, both of whom she sought to despoil at the push of bayonet—when they were down. If Paderewski will play the piano now, let him, for heaven's sake play for all he is worth, and give to Europe that new dynamic sense that can alone "waft Mary Rose back to us."

She will, of course, come in time, for life is youth, and Love and Harmony, not the hobgoblins conjured up by old men, many of them notably who have no sons—a fact this which historians will assuredly fasten upon as a part clue to our present madness. As we contemplate the retribution that has overtaken vainglorious Poland, it is impossible not to see in this sudden and catastrophic prostration a warning flashed on the portals of every Parliament in Europe, the writing on the wall. To us, its message smarts, like the salt of the sea. It points at our heart-strings over Ireland, which is no longer a physical-force problem but a simple question of culture upon the

solution of which will depend the manner and the progress of our imperial association. It warns us to dare force politics no more. It beckons us to trade with Russia, if only as a means to reduce food prices (at present, the bread price is a military policy, quite wrong economically, as the weather this summer has again reminded us). It is the beacon flare which we shall ignore at our peril.

Poland's militarism was to have been the apex of the military triangle which we were to fight for, and America was to finance. And that is the meaning of her failure. The balance of power is upset. Militarily, it was from the first an incredibly weak position, only tenable so long as Russia was disintegrate and herself ravaged with internal war. I am confident that the Bolshevists will show magnanimity, and will neither seek to annex nor despoil. If, then, a treaty is made on sound lines, Europe, the civilised Europe of Britain and France, will be confronted with an act of civilisation that they cannot, an they are to endure as leaders of thought and culture, ignore; in the teeth of which ultimately they will not be able to stand in isolation. The coming Bolshevists' peace will thus set a standard or bury a standard. If Russia makes a just peace, we cannot stand out with the false standard set up at Paris, cannot because the Peoples will not in the end *pay* for it or fight for it. The moral of E.P.D. shows that. Our economic difficulties are caused by policy, and they will only cease when the policy that necessitates our present gigantic expenditure on arms and war services and their attendant bureaucracy is changed for a policy of peace and production. Poland's collapse doubles our military liabilities, trebles our risk, quintuples our war insurance policy, for with an open Eastern arm we have made of "White" Russia a nationalist enemy, as in the days of the Crimean war. To talk of cutting down expenditure to-day is insincere so long as our policy is the holding down of Europe by force in line with French chauvinism, as of course the newspapers which support this militarist position are well aware of. Thus Poland is our economic index. If we are to continue our policy of dominati n, now threatened and abused, we must be prepared to fight for it; that is, we must pay for the military preparedness necessary. We can only

hope to preserve this position on conscription, otherwise we shall once more not be ready when the blow falls. All Balkanised Central Europe is again in the melting-pot, and there are threefold more national and racial injustices to-day to fight for than there were in 1914. Are the men who have no sons to drive ours into the next war? For Poland? For the Roumanians, who, with whips and bayonets are crushing out the language of Hungarian boys in Transylvania? For the Czechs? For the Jugo-Slavs when they start their "push" against D'Annunzio the poet towards the Italian seas? These questions are real issues to-day with that broken "sanitary cordon." They require Britain's concentrated thought. For this is certain. We shall have to fight for these foreign dislocations and annexations, or become C.O.'s in the matter, as Poland concretely proves. We did not, dared not, could not, prevent Poland's collapse. Neither shall we be able to prevent the next collapse when it comes. So vanity crumbles. If we are to be a second Rome, good; let us have a £2,000,000,000 Budget. But we cannot have it both ways. Either now we return to reason and a reasonable map, or we shall break the banks trying to foot the bill on behalf of a theoretic militarism.

And so we return to economics, which is the key to Europe's whole future. We are not thinking. The very men who scream "deflate," who shriek at the Government's "extravagance," who curse Mr. Chamberlain's E.P.D.—where is their patriotism? How can Mr. Lloyd George deflate if he has to hang the Kaiser, extract £6,000,000,000 out of Germany, reconquer Mesopotamia, occupy the Dardanelles, smash Lenin, Ireland, India, and the Turk and withal seize all the oil in Europe and maintain an army ready at any moment to march into the Ruhr valley to prod German miners into working the pits? What does the Federation of British Industries mean by its unpatriotic objection to pay the taxes necessary, absolutely necessary, to arm and equip us for the Cæsarian *rôle* adopted (with cheers) at Paris? It is grossly unpatriotic of them. They ought to insist upon Mr. Churchill enforcing conscription. They ought to be only too proud to furnish Mr. Churchill with the means to meet the demands of wastage necessary

in the next decade—if, that is, they want those oil shares to pay fat dividends, if they wish to hang the Kaiser, if they hope to extract money out of a bankrupt Germany, if they mean their sons to fight for the "sanitary cordon" and the map of revenge, if they really are honest "patriots" who will back up France's demand for the Rhine, and will see that she gets it. These men are no patriots who grudge Mr. Chamberlain his taxes. They are losing the peace; they are anti-Mesopotamians. Mr. Chamberlain is only doing his duty. (Poor man! he can't balance the Budget yet.) A more unimperial exhibition was never witnessed, and were it not that the majority of these gentlemen have probably never thought about the matter at all, they would deserve to be pilloried in every Jingo newspaper in Britain and Ireland as traitors to their own victory.

Mr. Lloyd George, of course, does know—now, what the peace is going to cost us, what terrible wars face us if we seriously mean to fight for the map, what a ghastly havoc there will be in the cities of Europe, seeing that the next war will be fought with poison gases from the air, and the objectives will certainly be the women and children making munitions at home. Fortunately for the Premier (he is not called The Wizard for nothing), Poland has collapsed, thereby writing off our most important military liability growing up in the shape of a German-Russian war of "liberation" which in all probability would leave America, sick to death of European politics, "cold." Thus Poland has come to the rescue of Mr. Chamberlain. With a sigh of relief, anxious fathers can write off this first call on their sons for ex-territorial service. We shall not now be asked to fight for Poland. It is a great deflation potential. All Lombard Street must be rejoicing. The fourth partition of Poland will not be the cause of another British cenotaph. Spa matters little. If the French policy is the Rhine, its incidence is immediately reflected in the fall of the sovereign in New York, the direct result of Spa. Fictitious wrangles about a fictitious indemnity may tickle the fancy of newspaper readers on their way to the City, but no man in his senses can imagine that we can continue holding conferences every two months varied by threats to occupy parts of Germany if the transfer of value, which is the only

thing worth discussing, proves to be as difficult to realise as mere talk about it proves difficult to understand. At Spa no fundamentals were reached; though atmospherically progress may be recorded. The only real question there was the disarming of Germans with hidden rifles, due entirely to the Polish situation, and the fear that Russia would again effect contact with Germany. All else was shelved for future secret diplomatic negotiation. The sooner in the circumstances we proceed to occupy the Ruhr valley, the quicker we shall learn what the folly costs us in money and life. Two such occupations, and Mr. Chamberlain will have to insist upon an 80 per cent. E.P.D., and our exchange in America will fall to 3 dollars, and if the F.B.I. complain then, we shall have to pass willy-nilly to the capital levy, or the nationalisation of all war profits. Again, Poland has saved our war profiteers. We have another breathing space. The next row will begin over the allocation of the Teschen coal mines—the Poles have a poor chance now—and that of the Silesian coal-field. And so it must be so long as the Allies regard themselves as military dictators whose reason is force, and whose compelling argument is the interpretership of Marshal Foch, who ended the war two years ago.

Probably few men realise the tremendous crisis in which we consequently stand as the result of Poland's fall, and the reconsolidation of the Russias as a national whole. If, pushed by the militarist school, Allied policy aims at an attempt to gain time or ruse so as to re-equip Poland, or in another contemptuous "hand-out" to Soviet Russia, assuredly we shall stand on the brink of a secondary world-war which will lead to the bankruptcy *de facto* of all belligerent Europe. All will turn on the spirit. By the rights of war, as interpreted by the Allies at Paris, Soviet Russia can treat Poland on the principle of *Væ Victis*, yet not for a moment do I credit this. We shall probably be astonished at the clemency and wisdom of the Soviet policy. And that will be our chance. It flings us back automatically on the German position, the crux of which is coal. Now, if we want money out of Germany—I certainly hold that Germany should pay £3,000,000,000—she must be placed in a position to make

money; that is, she must have coal for her industries, or she cannot export. And she must have food to feed her people and manure to grow food, and economically she must be set free: she must be given peace. That is the pre-condition of recovery. All will depend then upon coal. No coal, no indemnities. That is a truism known to every banker in these islands. At the next Conference we can begin the reconstruction of Europe or prepare to fight for the broken war-map. There are no alternatives. If we wish to save France, that is the only policy left to us. Germany must be placed economically in the saddle provided she undertakes to pay Belgium and France a fair indemnity; but this she can only do, no matter how often we occupy the Ruhr Valley, or rather, still less when we do occupy that valley, if the Silesian coal-fields are restored to her, seeing that France has annexed the historic German region of the Saar, which was the basis of her industrialism. This Silesian coal question will be the turning-point, and over it we either make another Alsace-Lorraine or chronic war-point, or re-establish an economic potential, thereby paving the way for reconciliation. There is no other way. Choose the Alsace-Lorraine way advocated by the militarists, then to bleat about high taxes is foolish and unpatriotic. That force position can only be held by force, and in the meanwhile we must pay for it. Our only chance then would be to arm to the teeth, and, like France, to conscript our African subjects. And there will be no indemnities and no peace, and all prices will rise.

Not many people thought they would see this signal breakdown of the Treaty, but all careful students of war, history and politics foresaw and foretold it (in this REVIEW the exact present position was predicted months ago). It is in reality a highly discreditable reflection upon our War and Foreign Offices, for a firm word from them would have prevented Poland's humiliation, which to-day we share with her. Notably the failure of our Press stands out. Where is our Press judgment? Why has the British Press allowed this war which every foreign correspondent knew was hopeless and a European crime? Mr. Churchill should certainly be given to understand that he had better go back to polo. We cannot afford any more of his military adven-

tures now that railway fares are going up and with them, of course, all prices, and besides—our national humour is engaged. We made this militarist Poland. We must accept the consequences. We cannot leave her now in the lurch. But we won't fight for her, and with the exception of those who want a £1,000,000,000 Budget, we must point out to her that if she can't Budget neither can we,—for we have still a lot of companies to float and as many wars to wage. The Premier can dance a mazurka on that point, and say good-bye to the "Grand Duchy" dream.

And so, after all these wild years Mary Rose may come home, brought back by the splendour of youth. She has disappeared since 1914. Perhaps Poland will first sight her, perhaps she will be introduced by Mr. Krassin, or it may be that Mr. Lloyd George, grasping his Welsh fervour with both hands, will blow her the first kiss. It is holiday time, August, the ominous month of war. What will be the harvest? Assuredly we shall close, or reopen, the world-war. A starving Europe will not starve indefinitely by order of a few insensate politicians, and any collapse of the Polish Peace Conference would open the floodgates of despair. But money is getting tight. With E.P.D. on their shoulders, the half-blind men who shout "squandermania" will not lightly incur super-squandermania for the benefit of the Commanding Generals who fear the inactivity of times of peace, and super-squandermania is the immediate and indispensable corollary of war. If Mary Rose is to return, she must be invoked, conjured back by love and life and youth, and the ghosts of war must be spirited away. Now is the time to summon the League of Nations, to make a real and true peace. Civilisation is the stake. War external and internal, or peace at home and abroad. If Mr. Lloyd George will stand for a moment in thought before the statue of Wellington, he should recover England's spirit and, let us hope, assert England's spirit, for England will then be behind him. The youth of Europe cries out for Mary Rose. We shall see her soon again now, or wander anew through the empty halls of death, some of us to fight for hate, but the best of us surely to fight for life and for the lives of our issue.

A Footnote to Hueffer

To the Editor of the English Review.

Sir,—I have long had an uneasy feeling about my old neighbour in Kent, Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer. I knew that he was capable of imaginative reminiscences, and that in a small way he had been busy with my name. Fantastic biographical details have drifted round to me. I have heard how Mr. Hueffer gainsaid and withstood me about things I never did and answered neatly things I never said. He is now breaking into print with this stuff. It is a great pity. Mr. Hueffer has written some delightful romances, and he is a very great poet. Why does he make capital of the friendliness and hospitalities of the past to tell stupid and belittling stories of another man who is, by his own showing, a very inferior and insignificant person? This childish falsehood about my lecturing him, or anyone, on how to write a novel, is particularly incredible. "How to do it" was the one topic upon which I never offered a contribution to my Kentish and Sussex neighbours. Only once did I lecture this drawling, blonde young man, as he was then, upon any literary matter. At our first meeting, he informed me that he had persuaded Mr. Joseph Conrad to collaborate with him. I tried to convey to him, as considerately as possible, what a very peculiar and untouchable thing was the Conrad prose fabric, and what a very mischievous enterprise he contemplated. That dead, witless book, "The Inheritors," justifies my warnings. That and a second book, of which I forget the title—it was an entirely stagnant "adventure" story, festering with fine language—were an abominable waste of Conrad's time and energy. For the rest, my conversations upon things literary with Mr. Hueffer were defensive. These endless chatterings about "how it is done," about the New Form of the Novel, about who was "greater" than who, about the possibilities of forming a "Group" or starting a "Movement" are things to be avoided at any cost. There is a subtle mischief in this fussing about literary comment, this preoccupation with phrases and artificial balances in composition and the details of work, these campaigns to establish standard catch-words in criticism and to manipulate reputations, which affects nearly everyone who indulges in these practices. Literature is not jewellery, it has quite other aims than perfection, and the more one thinks of "how it is done" the less one gets it done. These critical indulgences lead along a fatal path, away from every natural interest towards a preposterous emptiness of technical effort, a monstrous egotism of artistry, of which the later work of Henry James is the monumental warning. "It," the subject, the thing or the thought, has long since disappeared in these amazing works; nothing remains but the way it has been "manipulated." No

beauty is left, no discovery. Here are no healing waters of thought, no fair gardens of invention, no distant prospects. The votary is invited to bathe in the pure sweat of the writer and rejoice. Sedulously I kept myself out of that talk—and it is no good for Mr. Hueffer to pretend that I ever came in.—Yours very sincerely,

H. G. WELLS.

Another Criticism

To the Editor of the ENGLISH REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—In Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer's very flattering reference to me in your July number, there is one passage which my sense of humour tells me is intended as the purest friendly "chaff," but which others might interpret seriously; and indeed a cutting received the other day is a proof that this has happened. I hardly supposed that it *could,* though I thought it might; if I had really anticipated such a thing I should have asked you sooner, as I ask you now, to let me say in your columns that all the reference in Mr. Hueffer's article to my "influence" on the *Yellow Book* is simply *persiflage.* Mr. Hueffer knows as well as I know that I was the lowest of the angels. I contributed only twice to the *Y.B.* (to my sorrow), and I contributed under a very stupid *nom de guerre*—that of "Frances F. Huntley." (My reasons for that folly were as uninteresting as the pseudonym itself.) Certainly it *is* my greatest pride that Mr. Henry Harland was my first editor; that he "discovered" me, as people say; but that did not make me anything but the humblest of his group of writers; for I was very young and wholly inexperienced—"off my head," indeed, with pride and gratitude at being so included, but not so utterly besotted that I even for a moment imagined that anything I thought or said or did could influence him—as most certainly it never did. And I must say for myself that to attempt it never once entered my mind.

These sallies, which writers can enjoy among themselves, are sometimes ill-advised in print. I feel that this is an instance when a harmless joke might well annoy those to whom Mr. Harland's memory is dearer even than it is to me. Therefore I shall be very grateful to you if you will let me say these few words in the ENGLISH REVIEW for August.—Yours faithfully,

ETHEL COLBURN MAYNE.

"The Liberators"

On the south or anti-Lloyd-George side of the Thames, the Surrey Theatre has started into celebrity with a new People's Drama Society, producing a play *The Liberators*, by a Serb, on war, as it is, was, and ever will be. To the jaded palate of a public which has come to regard war as an institution, and the theatre, as simply a platform for "laughy" plays, fairy stories, farces and musical shows, this adult stuff was rather a trial, chiefly because "arms and the man" in the Balkans is a bit played out, and the author did not know that here we weep at Peter Pan and laugh at war.

Still it was a sincere, if young, effort, a sermon, a beginning. Travestied with a funny man, and some attention to omission and illusion, it might run on the box-office stage for four nights and a-half. Congratulations! Meanwhile, great is the heart-burning in stage-land, where plays move on and off almost in competition with the rival mechanism. The reason is commercialism. The theatre, too, has become a speculator's field, and so houses get let and sub-let always at a higher figure until there is no margin of profit left. Art cannot flourish with a theatre rent of £350 a week! That is all. The result will be a "knock-out." The moving picture speculators will buy up the theatres, as already is the case in the provinces. We are entering a transition stage, in which only fairy plays and farces will stand a chance before the incursions of Revues and "Movies," whose business is "your money."

The sooner some foreign Jew or syndicate commercialises the whole bally stage, the better, for then there will be a reaction and, as is happening, new groups will form, such as Nigel Playfair's at Hammersmith, and at last disgusted with the dreary fare presented those who don't mean to be fooled all the time will begin to patronise the liberators and creators. But it will be a fight, and for the time capital will win. There can be no improvement until

the slump drives the speculators out of the theatre, drives the amateur manager out of business, drives the actors into conscious revolt at their own art degradation. The question is: Was Lincoln right?

Can the people be fooled all the time? In Lincoln's day, probably not, but in our days the answer is doubtful. Our theatre has sunk so low intellectually that a play dealing faithfully with life is taboo. If a play is not deliberately written to get "that giggle," to get the pit and the gallery's love of sentimentality and unreality, managers shy like colts. "There is no money in it," they say. Now the joke of it is that there is no money in their own plays. [Enter the Movie syndicate.] The real need is of a National Theatre, for such a thing would set a standard whereby other theatres would be judged. Why does not some war-profiteer go in for this? It could be done for £300,000. We have plenty of good character actors, if very few actresses. But at present there is no standard and no criticism. The Theatre is viewed as an entertainment. To criticise an entertainment is foolish. It is unkind to the speculators.

All the same there is plenty of bustle. If not this, try that. Good plays do get on and do run, and, if the American invasion still swamps us, plays, as distinct from chuckle-sides, there will be. (See *The Skin Game*.)

There is also a play crisis in Movie Land (a good sign), and a plot crisis in Musical Comedy. Bernard Shaw threatens with a new play, and so does Drinkwater. Hammersmith and the Surrey Theatres hold the sponge, while Grossmith-Laurillard and the Movie man prepare to fight it out *à la* Dempsey versus Carpentier; or perhaps, talk it out, which may be even more exciting.

The stakes are held by the public, and they may put on theatrical overalls this winter to meet the rising prices. Then who knows? The speculators will drop out to happier hunting-grounds. Like Mary in the play, Ibsen may come back, the play may once more become the thing. There seem to be some budding playwrights about. If the "wet" play failed, the "dry" play may succeed. The miners and railwaymen between them may yet restore the British stage to social eminence, for we have yet to have a "Bolshie" play, a "Spook" play, and a play written for

flappers, to which all men over forty are excluded. Similarly one excluding all flappers.

In the meanwhile three suggestions seem apposite. Don't enter into management. Don't miss *The Beggar's Opera*. Don't believe the rumour that *Chu Chin Chow* has acquired the rights of all London's playhouses for £400,000,000,000, on paper. That is only the figure of the German indemnity, also on paper. S. O.

Dedicated to Art

By Thomas Moult

"HENCEFORWARD," wrote Rupert Brooke, "I am going to lead 'a Life Dedicated to Art.' *Hurray!*" The travesty which certain French and English artists of last century made of their lives is worth recalling as the consequence of a similar though solemner vow, and we would have shaken our heads with ill-boding were the utterance credited against another than the most easy of heart among men of our age and without the saving exclamation at the end. There is something fatal in the very words; merely for them to be spoken is generally as though the speaker had sworn, so far as concerns the human three-fourths of him, to commit slow suicide. Brooke claimed in one of his more serious moments that there are three things in the world, to read poetry, to write poetry, and to live poetry. But he was too great a lover of life as an end in itself to have failed in the quick realisation, had he lived, that the world offers to artists a further thing, which is to regard their art, their poetry, as the main occupation of life, and yet be able to forget all about it.

Art is not life. It is but a part of life, however goodly and apparently self-sufficient that part may be. Gerard de Nerval said, cynically, "My valet will live for me," and forthwith betook himself to the boulevards, leading a lobster as most folk lead a dog, at the end of a string. Swinburne and Oscar Wilde lived the "artistic" life until Watts-Dunton and prison rescued them from what had come to be a very questionable sort of affair. William Morris, on the other hand, lived something approaching it quite admirably to the very end, perhaps because of his ignorance that he so lived; besides, in his early days, Morris had received a good education in a subject which is not usually sought after by the artist—that of economics. Is it partly because Brooke also was not unacquainted with

the subject that he, too, might have carried out his vow without giving us undue cause for trepidation? An artist is a pitiful fellow if he knows nothing of economics and sociology, no less than are the economist and sociologist who know nothing of art. In the one case, substance is given for the imagination to work upon, and in the other, imagination makes the substance something more than a lump of clod.

So far we have left out of account the element that is pleasantly known as the humorous sense. Morris, of course, was not devoid of it, and Mr. Edward Marsh's memoir convinces us that Brooke, who possessed it in full flower from his earliest days, could never have uttered that vow concerning a life-dedication without the final "Hurray!" There has been one notable figure of our time, however, who was surprisingly helpless if the need came to take everyday affairs other than seriously. He did not even know *when* to take them other than seriously. And yet his life was given to art with such entire purpose that is for us a more vivid if saner example of devotion than even the men of the 'nineties or Gerard de Nerval. Henry James's letters* reveal him as one whose belief sent him venturing into all kinds of spiritual aloofness. That belief, writes Mr. Lubbock, introducing with much ripe wisdom and very adequately the correspondence entrusted to his painstaking editorship, lay in "the sanctity and sufficiency of the life of art," which was "nothing less than the actual creation of life out of the void. He did not scruple to claim that except through art there is no life that can be known or appraised."

A little consideration in the light of scientific discovery, of course, and Henry James would have been aware that there can be no creation of life out of the void. Nor can the imagination feed upon itself with profit, or a hermit ever become a great artist in any but the most erotic sense; and had he made himself aware of these things also, the series of novels which mounted to its apex with "The Golden Bowl" might not have fallen, as the work of Pater has fallen, with such unease upon the general mind of a generation that is rediscovering Shakespeare. Like Pater,

* *The Letters of Henry James.* Selected and edited by Percy Lubbock. Two vols. with portraits. Macmillan. 36*s.* net.

he stimulated his imagination by artificial means—simply because he was aloof from the source of the legitimate and natural material of art, which is obviously life itself. None of the letters in the two volumes—and there is, so far as he was concerned, an exhaustive range of them, from his early manhood until his end at the age of seventy-two—is written to anyone higher than a countess or lower than a fellow-novelist; a narrow circle, forsooth, and it was inevitable that the hypertrophied and over-civilised existence reflected in it should be identified in his work. Realising this, Mr. Lubbock suggests that the work was saved (although he nowhere makes of the preface an apologia) because James "found a livelier interest, always, in the results and effects and implications of things than in the groundwork itself." But the results and effects and implications of what was truly an emasculated existence will be emasculated no less; James's attitude towards practically every event outside his own range, and especially towards the European war, reveals how gravely aloof that existence was, in spite of its loveableness, its devotion, its lofty grace.

Henry James the novelist! He gives little sign that he smelled or tasted flesh and blood, beheld tears and lust, listened to laughter, or grew hot with the pride of life that kills as well as inspires. Consequently there was in the outer world nothing for him but that which seemed agreeable, and with which he therefore did not evade contact. His acquaintances were rosily coloured over, as though by a big paint-brush, instantly he or she came within reach of him; always the artist gave the welcome, not the man. His genius had its own way of greeting, the rosifying process transforming each one into an artistic ideal. Even the correspondence itself is not correspondence in any ordinary sense; it is a series of exquisite essays. The theatre-going public was "the most brutishly and densely vulgar of all the vulgar publics London contains" when it preferred the "helpless," "crude," "bad," "clumsy," "feeble," "vulgar" piece by Oscar Wilde to his own, which, on the basis of Wilde's being a play or success, "is necessarily neither" ("'The Ideal Husband' is a play and nothing less," wrote Mr. Bernard Shaw at the time . .). On one occasion in the letters he speaks of "the good little Thomas

Hardy"; at another he appears to make the charge, concerning "Tess," of salacious writing. One wonders, and is left wondering, what he made of Mr. D. H. Lawrence's work, introduced to him by Mr. Walpole. All these things, and others of the type, are done for reasons which seem perfectly obvious.

His attitude towards the European War was deplorably self-centred—unless his correspondence conveys a wrong impression of the occasion. But by this the dedication of himself to art made habitual an egotism which persisted in regarding his own condition of mind as the only, not merely the central factor in a setting of artistic glamour which we can hardly believe was for him the actual world. "We must know," he wrote to a young correspondent, also a novelist, in one of his most remarkable letters, "we must know as much as possible, in our beautiful art, yours and mine, what we are talking about—and the only way to know it is to have lived and loved and cursed and floundered and enjoyed and suffered." Even granting that he carried his axiom into practice, it is an incomplete sort of knowledge if it does not extend to the other humans who have lived and loved and done the other things. Not by "going to the people"—that pose of insincere anarchy—is such knowledge gained, but by facing life without first casting an artificial glamour upon it. There is surely all the glamour needful upon everything for an artist such as he . . . Nor does it come altogether as a shock to us to learn that of the limited edition of Henry James's collected works the sales could be counted almost on two pairs of hands. Henry James with the paint brush that he took up at his "dedication" was bound to reap consequences of one sort or another, just as would be an engine driver who assumed coloured spectacles on his journey at twilight. If only such a monarch of his realm had been able to shout that final "Hurray!"

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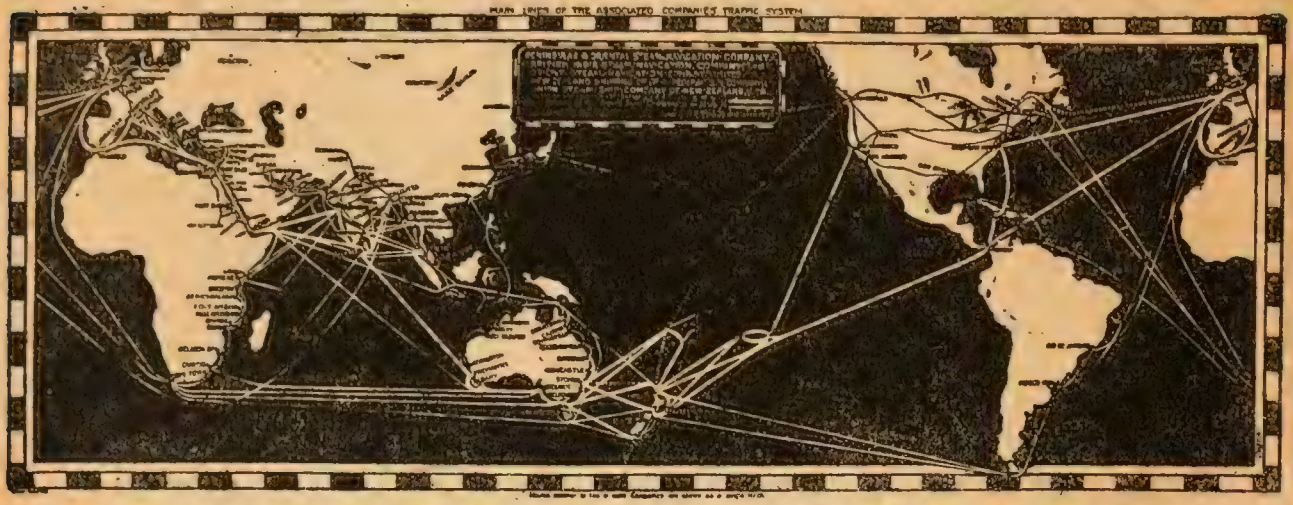

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Books

BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF DISRAELI. VOLS. V. AND VI. By GEORGE EARLE BUCKLE. John Murray. 18*s.* net each.

IF it be true that every country gets the Jew it deserves, England may well take pride in Disraeli, as the perfect reward of a biblical generation, with the precedents of Daniel, Joseph, Zorshabel, and many other courtier statesmen of the Old Testament well in mind. Did not these sleek young Hebrews add astuteness to thrones and gifts to rulers; were they not, in fact, perfect types of the sagacious flatterer and sycophantic opportunist; the Machiavellis of their day? —and Disraeli, who scooped the Canal shares, bluffed Bismarck, gave his sovereign promotion to Empress (of India), and joined in the royal indignation against ritualism and Russia; played the old part, in the eyes of an admiring Gentile world, with the approved adroitness, devotion, and singleness of purpose.

Mr. Buckle, who succeeded the late Mr. W. F. Monypenny in the congenial task of writing Disraeli's life, has been singularly fortunate in gaining access to the correspondence between Queen Victoria and her favourite Minister, as well as to the innumerable letters written by the septuagenarian historian to the beautiful friends

of his youth, the sister Countesses of Bradford and Chesterfield. Selena Bradford (who did not care for his novels, and only tolerated his elderly devotion) was the recipient of endless notes giving the gist of events as they happened, without ceremonial wrappings, and these tender confidences, taken in conjunction with the more courtly stream of intelligence for royal eyes, take the reader well behind the scenes in every crisis great or small, without, however, quite stripping Disraeli of his alluring mystery.

Impossible not to admire this ageing man, full of gout and asthma, but fresh-hearted as a boy in his love for Lady Bradford; affectionate and loyal to his friends, idolising his sovereign lady, and alluding to her as "Fairy"; a true lover of England's greatness, as he saw it, in the old grandiose terms of territory and title; carrying on with indomitable will and courage for the end as he saw it good, and punctuating his terms of power with novels; the last, *Endymion,* written at seventy-five, and selling for ten thousand. Incidentally he "backed the wrong horse," but sustained the prestige and glory of England to the entire satisfaction of the class he adored.

What quality is it that has endeared this indomitable Israelite to the hearts of the English? In the final analysis it is probably his pluck. One recalls the success of his flamboyant novels, the enthusiasm of the true blue crowds, and the fine old "Jingo" spirit of a people weltering in prosperity and squalor, and one wonders did this curious personality dream of a real world in the making or of a static set of problems to be wangled, adjusted, flattered, and neglected as the momentary need dictated? Tenniel drew him as the sphinx; Mr. Buckle adds the hero; but sphinx he remains—a great, outstanding figure, and a most engaging personality for a biography. Mr. Buckle has done his part extremely well; to him has fallen the crowning years of a great career to which the disciplined enthusiasm of the author-editor has given sympathetic actuality, many portraits, and a good index.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BOOTH, FOUNDER OF THE SALVATION ARMY. By HAROLD BEGBIE. Macmillan and Co. Two volumes with portraits. 42*s.* net.

FUTURE generations will require to take Mr. Begbie's biography of "General" Booth into account for two distinct and independent reasons. In Booth's diaries are contained what is among the most important contributions to the study of the phenomenon of religious hysteria in European countries; almost unique, indeed, in that the evidence is given by one who spent his life in fanning the flame of it. Appalling as such evidence is, it is not without its comic side. "One brother said (at a revivalist meeting when the fever was at its height), 'Oh, oh! if this ain't Heaven, what'll Heaven be?' Another brother said, 'I must jump.' I said, 'Then jump,' and he jumped all round the room. . . ."

It is also the biography of one whom we must henceforward regard, whether we like it or not, as of the great, almost the last of, the Victorians. Booth's methods are revealed as those of a master-worker, and for the first time most of us are able to appraise his stature without prejudice. His eighty years were crowded with

earnest, passionate, and single-minded living. His father was English, but one of the volumes contains a portrait which indicates his descent on his mother's side as partly Jewish—and this will account to a good extent for his own fanaticism. He fought against seemingly insurmountable difficulties in establishing the Salvation Army—and conquered them, incidentally transforming universal enmity into well-nigh universal respect and affection. Even the unpleasant facts of his particular method and that his success depended entirely on what must be admitted in his converts as a soddening of the conscience, a dwarfing of manhood, and a subservience of the mind, do not count with us against such single-heartedness. Fanaticism depends for its existence on ignorance. Booth was very ignorant. His sublime *naïveté* actually enabled him to write in his diary concerning the sudden death of an Army worker: "His translation has been sudden. Well and at work Sunday—attacked by a shivering fit on Monday—and in Heaven on Thursday morning." But it also enabled him, when late in his life King Edward asked him how he was getting on with the Churches, to answer with a good measure of truth, "Sir, they imitate me." . . . Plainly it has been Mr. Begbie's business to show his subject at his best; but, apart from this, the thousand pages that make up the two volumes possess all the attributes of a great biography. The material is handled well, and, apart from its skill and sympathy, the narrative is everywhere steeped in the spirit of a remarkable man. T. M.

FICTION.

PENELOPE. By ELIZABETH KIRBY. Hodder and Stoughton. 8*s*. 6*d*. net.

Penelope was not exactly the usual girl, and in consequence her experiences of life and romance were exciting. She had a capacity for self-criticism. She was bored. She liked men. She "saw the world differently" to most of her type and caught it, as people do who cross the conventions. It is a pretty tale, rather poetic and sad and somewhat perplexing. It strikes an essentially woman's note, and certainly has an atmosphere which raises it above the ordinary novel with a "story." *Penelope* is psychology. It is amusing and pleasingly audacious.

THE VANITY GIRL. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Cassell. 8*s*. 6*d*. net.

The Vanity Girl is the story of a chorus girl or show lady with looks, brains, and ambition—just the sort of history that the great world wants to hear, told with abundant verisimilitude, and dedicated to Miss Fay Compton, from whose theatrical experiences it is emphatically not derived (see preface). This vain and selfish beauty is traced from her smug and respectable home in West Kensington through vicissitudes of swank and savvy to her Devonshire seat at Clare Court and further, in a brilliant, superficial exposition of the life as it is lived; but Mr. Mackenzie, after entertaining us with a quite unsympathetic but amusing figure during her rise, makes the mistake of bringing his charming puppet to life and showing us her words—a mistake, because all that is inside her lovely skin is far less interesting than the superficies. Still, she does come to life, and the reader ceases

to regard her as an amusing spectacle without being able to accept her as a lovable fellow-creature; so that her life and adventures in the second phase have to rely upon the amazingly vivid by-play of up-to-date living, with the technique of the turf, gardening, and obstetrics all vividly done. The drama is supplied by the pursuit of an ape-like financier who entraps the spendthrift young Earl and his Countess in his theatrical net, and there is a more or less satisfying *dénouement*. Needless to say that the setting and characters are extraordinarily good, and that the author's commentary is smart and incisive.

VERSE.

MANSOUL: OR THE RIDDLE OF THE WORLD. By CHARLES M. DOUGHTY. Selwyn and Blount. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THE HAPPY BRIDE. By F. TENNYSON JESSE. Heinemann. 6*s*. net.

NIGHT WINDS OF ARABY. By A. J. EARDLEY WILLIAMS. Grant Richards. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

POEMS WRITTEN AT RUHLEBEN. By TERENCE PHILIP. Grant Richards. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

SONGS FROM AN ULSTER VALLEY. By HERBERT MOORE PIM. Grant Richards. 3*s*. 6*d*. net.

FLOWERS IN THE GRASS. (WILTSHIRE PLAINSONG.) By MAURICE HEWLETT. Constable. 5*s*. net.

IF a contemporary writer should hark back deliberately to the community of Edmund Spenser and the other earlier poets whom it is the fashion just now to regard as poetically obsolete, if he should hark back not only spiritually, but in language and rhythm, he must be prepared to find that the persons patient enough to make the effort to appreciate his poem will be altogether negligible in comparison with those who disdain it. Mr. Doughty himself would not be sufficiently rash to hope that everybody, even the best-intentioned, can appreciate an epic of five thousand lines in which is made, by the Muse's guidance, a descent into Hell, and not only to the scenes therein of unhappiness which Christ and Dante beheld, but scenes which culminate in the woe of modern Belgium, thence upward again to an English countryside, tangled of woodland and faerie, and ultimately to a vision of a new Apocalypse. Even were such a poem composed in the normal speech of our own day it would be too definitely removed from human existence to intrigue the contemporary mind; but when it opens with lines of such unfamiliar wording, rhythm, and punctuation as Mr. Doughty's—

> As chanced I sate on terrace of a house,
> In summer season, after sickness past;
> And fell, surprised my sense, into deep trance;
> Wherein meseemed, much musing in my thought;
> I cogitations heard, of many hearts;
> That came and went, in Mantowns market-place,
> Whereon I looked . . .

and sustains the manner throughout, the would-be reader will find that sympathy is an inadequate sort of aid. A certain familiarity with archaic syntax, with philological methods and archæological truths is his requirement. . . . But the reward will be unique among the rewards of our poetic generation—an intimacy with a poet who is not only true and endowed with unique technical mastery, but uplifted on occasion to the height of his "lodestar," the poet of *The Faerie Queen* himself, even though the dignity and beauty of Mr. Doughty's expression are supported by little or none of the profundity of his forerunner's motive.

Miss Tennyson Jesse's verse also is not without its traditions. But in her case the form alone, neither the manner nor the matter, is based on the technique of earlier and classic writers. Her mood and inspiration are entirely of her own Cornish waters, hearthside, and heatherland—

> Along the lane where I passed the faded sorrel shows rusty,
> Naked the windwilted thorns crouch by the granite boulders;
> On the day that I buried you, lass, the June sun was lusty,
> Made the new-varnished coffin gleam upon the black shoulders.

A dreaming wisdom and quiet, old-world beauty pervade the poems even where they appear to be most uneven. There is, by contrast, the restless questing spirit of our own day in the volumes by Mr. Eardley Dawson and Mr. Philip. Mr. Dawson is impatient with man's "anæmic cry." For him is the full-throated and frank, if entirely descriptive, utterance that gives us competent sonnets concerning an Arabian dancing-girl and the bazaar. Mr. Philip's temperament is less in harmony with the mood stirred in him by his experience in Ruhleben prison camp. Sooner or later he will do some good work on the lines of "Prelude from a Letter."

To say that Mr. Herbert Moore Pim's sonnets have impressed us, and that they are of importance, is not to suggest that his other work is of any less; just as to say that of all the verses in Mr. Hewlett's new volume we prefer the Icelandic ballad at the end is not to belittle those that precede it so much as to indicate quite frankly that we are out of touch with the spirit which has produced them.

T. M.

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